

Commentary

Volume Seventy-two, Number Four, October 1981

On the Ninth of Ab

Frank
Talmage

Speaking to the Third World

Peter L.
Berger

The Surrealists in New York

Lionel
Abel

Bribing Delinquents to be Good

Susan
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Beyond Nuremberg

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William Petersen
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Fiction: Sequels

Pearl K.
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Commentary

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Letters from Readers

The Killing Ground

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Robert Alter's cogent criticism of the exploitation of the Holocaust ["Deformations of the Holocaust," February] evoked intense debate among correspondents in your June issue. Yet that same issue contained George Watson's curious attempt to imply that Stalin and the Soviet Union bear major responsibility not only for having presented Nazi Germany with a model for mass murder, but for actually cooperating in the Holocaust ["Rehearsal for the Holocaust?"]. Actually, Stalin's record is monstrous enough without having to indict him for Hitler's crimes as well.

Mr. Watson is fundamentally wrong to imply that the decision to kill all the Jews was made at the infamous Wannsee Conference of January 20, 1942. . . Just when the actual decision by Hitler to eliminate all Jews once and for all was taken is unknown. Histories have narrowed the likely period down to between early December 1940 and mid-March 1941, joining the elimination of Jewry with the elimination of the "Jew-Bolshevik" Communist empire.

Himmler, head of the SS, was given special authority to eliminate all Jews and other Bolsheviks during the invasion of Russia. To carry out his orders, Himmler directed the formation of special mobile police units, the infamous *Einsatzgruppen*, which by the end of 1941 had killed at least a half-million Jews and others. Eventually, these mobile killing squads may have killed over two million, using firearms as well as mobile gas chambers.

The Wannsee Conference marked the attempt by Reinhard Heydrich, the commander of the Germany security and police forces, to coordinate the various bureaucracies of Nazi Germany for a major intensification and acceleration of the anti-Jewish campaign. (Heydrich had already been charged, on July 31, 1941, with the task of achieving the "Final Solution" to the Jewish question.) Did the Germans find and use a Soviet model for mass murder? Mr. Watson uses admittedly circumstantial evidence to build his case for an affirmative answer.

He refers to the secret military cooperation between Weimar Germany and Soviet Russia in the 1920's, when both were pariah states. He goes on to stress the cooperation in partitioned Poland (1939-41) in putting down resistance in the respective German and Soviet areas of occupation. Although the Soviets did perfidiously turn over to the Gestapo numerous German Communists, including Margarete Buber, whom Mr. Watson cites as a source, he goes too far when he claims that the Soviets turned over "vast numbers of Poles and others" for Nazi forced labor. Mr. Watson even suggests that the SS and NKVD exchanged concentration-camp personnel.

Perhaps the SS learned something of killing techniques from the shooting of over 4,000 Polish army officers and others whose remains were found in mass graves in the Katyn forest near Smolensk in February 1943. It is generally accepted that these Poles were killed by the Soviets, probably in April 1940, along with over 10,000 other Poles whose remains have never been located. But without any real evidence, Mr. Watson also suggests that the Katyn massacre was "discussed, even sponsored" at a secret conclave of the Gestapo and NKVD at Krakow, in April 1940.

Mr. Watson is fascinated by the superficial similarities in technique used by the Soviets at Katyn and by the German mobile-killing units later: the neatly layered bodies, shot through the back of the neck "rather than the heart." The Germans prided themselves on being "truly humane"; a shot in the back of the neck is more likely to be quickly fatal than an attempt to shoot through the heart. Additionally, one need not look the victim in the eyes. . .

Mr. Watson makes passing reference to the use of mass shootings as "the Soviet way" by the 1930's. Since he refers to Robert Conquest's *The Great Terror* (1968), it is odd that Mr. Watson does not go into the mass killings of hundreds and thousands of prisoners by the NKVD, ordered periodically during 1936-39. Conquest estimates a *minimum toll* in Stalin's great purge of over one million shot to death, while millions more died of starvation, exhaustion, and



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exposure in the prison camps of Siberia. Here is where one might find a comparison with the Nazi campaign against the Jews—although one should be careful to discern the difference between the political charges (albeit trumped up by Stalin's cohorts) and the Nazi racist goal of exterminating Jewry from the elderly to the infants....

It is wrong to identify, as Mr. Watson does, the use of the term "resettlement" in a September 1941 Soviet decree with the use it was put to by the Nazis. In the fall of 1941, the Soviet Union was engaged in a desperate effort to survive the massive German invasion. Millions of workers and whole factories were "resettled" to enable the Soviet Union to mount the counterattack that was a primary factor in the defeat of the Nazi juggernaut.

This is not to say that hundreds of thousands of Poles and others were not deported from Soviet-occupied areas to the Far East and Central Asia during 1939-41, before the German invasion. Conquest estimates that over a million Poles were deported as unreliable elements. They included over 200,000 captured Polish troops, among whom were many Jews, including a young officer named Menachem Begin.

Although tens of thousands of Jews died as a result of the harsh conditions in Soviet Central Asia or as a result of NKVD shootings (many Jewish officers were identified among the dead at Katyn), perhaps a quarter-million Polish Jews survived the war because of "resettlement" to the East of the Soviet Union. Of course, the Soviets made no special effort to shelter Jews from the Germans. Throughout the period preceding the June 1941 invasion, Soviet censorship blocked any reports of the persecutions, atrocities, and outright mass murder already being committed by the Germans in Poland. Thus, thousands of Jews mistakenly fled the oppressive Soviet regime for what they assumed could not be worse conditions in Western Poland....

Regarding the concentration camp, Mr. Watson makes the common error of confusing the handful of extermination camps (*Vernichtungslager*) with the mass of concentration camps. Although many thousands died in the German concentration camps

and all of the major camps had crematoria and small gas chambers, the concentration camps were not primarily for the purpose of killing. Initially set up to hold masses of arrestees, the camps would eventually become a major source of forced labor for the German war effort, though conditions were so brutal that an SS accountant during the war calculated that the average prisoner survived no more than nine months.

Thus, contrary to Mr. Watson's assertion, the Nazis did originate the *extermination* camp; they were pioneers in such systematized, mechanized, bureaucratized murder of millions of civilians. However, Mr. Watson is correct to imply that the Nazis did not invent the *concentration* camp. Not even Lenin has that dubious distinction. The first known uses of such camps were in Cuba by the Spanish and in South Africa by the British during the Boer War. The Bolsheviks may have used camps to hold the masses of "class enemies" arrested during the first years of the Soviet Union. The vast system of prison camps described by Solzhenitsyn was a necessary development to accommodate the millions upon millions arrested for political offenses real and imagined during Stalin's reign. Conquest estimates an average of eight million prisoners in the Soviet camps during the late 30's....

Finally, Mr. Watson's claim that Marx and Engels "publicly advocated racial extermination" is absurd. In fact, Conquest emphasizes that the founders of Communism were opposed to the use of terror. If Mr. Watson has the citation for racial extermination in the works of Marx and Engels, it would be useful to publish it....

ROBERT MOSES SHAPIRO
Baltimore Hebrew College
Baltimore, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

George Watson... claims in his article that "there is no known Soviet parallel to the Nazi gas chambers" and adds, "gas must be presumed the original Nazi contribution." May I cite a source that claims there *were* Soviet gas chambers as early as 1938?

The scarce, few witnesses who chanced by some miracle to survive from among those who took part in the annihilation of the old Communists also told us that bathhouses at

the brick factory had been rigged up as gas chambers for Oppositionists. Under the pretext of giving them sterilizing baths for hygienic purposes before they were to be shipped off, they herded people into these bathhouses, from which they never returned.

The quotation is from "Memoirs of a Bolshevik-Leninist" and appears on p. 171 of *Samizdat: Voices of the Soviet Opposition* (edited by George Saunders, Monad Press, New York, 1974). The author is anonymous but was once a member of the Left Opposition in the 1920's. The chambers apparently were at Vorkuta. The reference is cited with approval by Nikolai Tolstoy in his *Victims of Yalta*....

GREGORY J. LANNING
Vancouver, British Columbia

GEORGE WATSON writes:

Robert Shapiro is an inattentive reader. He calls me fundamentally wrong to imply that the Nazi decision to exterminate the Jews was first taken at the Wannsee Conference of January 1942, though in my article I called Wannsee "a climax rather than a beginning," adding that perhaps half a million had already died before that. There is no difference between us in this matter. Again, he complains that I go too far in speaking of "vast numbers of Poles" being turned over by the USSR to the Nazis as forced labor, during the Hitler-Stalin pact, though the remark is not mine but Winston Churchill's, and though I quote that source. I have never claimed to know how many Poles were handed over.

I cannot understand why Mr. Shapiro accuses me, as an impropriety, of suggesting "without any real evidence" that the Katyn massacre of Poles by the Soviets was discussed and even sponsored by the NKVD-Gestapo conference in Cracow in April 1940. What I wrote was: "That these two events happened simultaneously may or may not be a coincidence." A suggestion, in fact, is all that it is. I fully accept and assert that similarities between Soviet and Nazi techniques of mass-killing, during and after their alliance of 1939-41, may be no more than circumstantial. My article was published to elicit evidence.

Other muddles remain. I am accused, in addition, of "identifying" Soviet uses of the term "reset-

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tlement" with the Nazis, though I do not; and of confusing concentration camps with extermination camps, though these terms sometimes need to be confused, since some camps served a double purpose. That there were institutions called concentration camps in Cuba and South Africa in the last century is beside the point: I was not concerned in my article with the lexical question of how this term arose, interesting as that question is, but with the priority of events themselves. Institutions are not resemblant merely by virtue of sharing a common name, as any People's Democracy shows.

Mr. Shapiro calls my claim that Marx and Engels publicly advocated racial extermination absurd, and challenges me to produce evidence from their published works. I have already done so, in my book *Politics and Literature in Modern Britain* (Macmillan: London, 1977), pp. 127 ff., in a chapter called "Race and the Socialists" previously published in *Encounter* (November 1976). The chief texts are from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (January-February 1849) on the Slavs: "...The chief mission of all other races and peoples, large and small, is to perish in the revolutionary holocaust;... they are counter-revolutionary." The article calls for extermination or absorption for "ethnic trash" ("Völkerabfall"): "The next world war will cause not only reactionary classes and dynasties, but also entire reactionary peoples to disappear from the earth. And that too is progress." A remarkable prediction of World War II, for 1849. *Politics and Literature* goes on to link Marx's belief in racial extermination with 19th-century views of eugenics, using the new evidence of Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* (1972), along with some details eventually incorporated in *Das Kapital* and reappearing in the writings of Beatrice Webb, H. G. Wells, and later socialists. I hope, then, that I will not be arraigned for lack of documentary evidence when I assert that racial purification has been a common, often an essential, element in socialist thought, in that century and this, and that Hitler's title to call himself a socialist, as he did throughout his political life, may have been better than is often supposed. Socialists should study their own scriptures more closely.

The reason why the Soviet holo-

caust is harder to research than the Nazi is that the same party is still in power in the USSR. No Soviet camp has ever been liberated, as the Nazi camps were. This makes my comparison speculative, for want of balancing evidence. I am well aware that I have not yet proved that the Nazis learned extermination from the Soviet Union: all I have shown is that they could have done so, and may have done so. But I am hopeful that others can do more. If there are camp survivors from Communist or Nazi hands, or any who remember them, who can recall evidence of Soviet-Nazi collaboration, or exchange of camp-personnel, or of similarities of method so exact as to be compelling, I warmly hope they will write to me at St. John's College, Cambridge, England.

Looking Ahead

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read Norman Podhoretz's article, "The Future Danger" [April], with great interest, especially his views on U.S.-China relations. In his recent visit to Peking, Secretary of State Haig made a premature policy announcement on arms sales to Peking, without, regrettably, there having been any prior national debate on this critical issue....

I recall that, as a college student in 1946, when I warned of the danger of losing China to the Communists, my warnings were rejected on the grounds that such concerns were irrelevant in the atomic age. Ironically, yesterday's strategic irrelevance has become today's imperative. Moral allowances are now made for China's brutal past on the grounds of "strategic necessity," "parallel interests," and so on... yet it seems to me that U.S. interests will not be served by a hasty tilt to Peking. Many imponderables must be taken into consideration. First, in the absence of any national debate on the issue, the American people are not willing to commit the nation to fight Peking's proxy war against the Soviet Union. A war between Moscow and Peking, moreover, would be a fratricidal war between Marxist brothers, which should not even involve the United States.... People have short memories. Before 1960 Peking and Moscow were brothers. True, they are quarreling now, but they might reconcile later in the 1980's... serious reservations about

the policy of arming Communist China have been voiced not only by the ASEAN nations (the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore), Japan, and South Korea, but also by several leading NATO experts, such as Rainer W. Rupp ("China's Strategic Arms and the Problems of Military Modernization," *NATO Review*, March 1981) and Derek Arnould, of NATO's Political Affairs Directorate....

Then, too, there is the question of what do we need from China and what does it need from us? It should be obvious who needs whom the most, and that what Peking is after is for the U.S. to underwrite its arms industry and modernize its armed forces—at a cost of billions. Already, high-level delegations have visited top-secret facilities like the North American Air Defense Command Headquarters in Colorado, facilities from which even the American press is barred. *Aviation Week & Space Technology* reported on June 9, 1981: "Front-line U.S. Navy aircraft were examined and discussed in detail by top defense officials of the People's Republic of China last week during a visit to the aircraft carrier *USS Ranger*.... Members of the delegation conducted extensive discussions with aircraft pilots and systems operators, asking penetrating questions... and taking copious notes."...

Dr. Miles Costick, president of the Institute on Strategic Trade in Washington, D.C., has estimated that the Soviets "obtained technical equipment and processes that would have cost them more than \$100 billion to acquire without U.S. aid." Chinese Communist military experts are obviously hoping to follow the Soviet example....

To increase cultural, economic, and trade relations with Peking is one thing, but to arm Communist China is quite a different matter. Hasty alliances with Peking will be detrimental to the best interests of the United States.

RICHARD H. YANG
East Asian Language & Area Center
Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

... I am fully in agreement with the major premise of Norman Podhoretz's article, that the Soviet Union is very likely, as an inherently aggressive power, to take advantage of the lead it has now

HERE'S WHAT'S NOW BEING SAID ABOUT TOBACCO SMOKE IN THE AIR.

Scientist disputes findings of cancer risk to nonsmokers

WASHINGTON (AP) — A scientist, after reviewing studies on the cancer risk of nonsmokers exposed to the cigarette smoke of others, has asserted that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that this so-called "passive smoking" poses a significant health risk.

Epidemiologist Lawrence Garfinkel said Friday that his examination of data in two large studies led him to conclude that too many other variables must be taken into account in determining a person's cancer risk.

He said no studies to date have

nonsmoking husbands

The Tobacco Institute has raised questions about the association for U.S. cigarette manufacturers, earlier in its evaluation of Hira's findings that he had

statistical error which his conclusions. Hira tended that no mistake made and stood by his

Garfinkel's work was in the June issue of the National Cancer Institute

He concluded that neither

Non-smoker cancer 'risk' questioned

SEATTLE (AP) — Contrary to recent findings by the Japanese, non-smoking women married to cigarette smokers run little if any increased risk of lung cancer, an American Cancer Society scientist said Wednesday.

Lawrence Garfinkel of New York, the society's vice president for epidemiology and statistics, also commented on other recent cancer studies, saying there is not yet sufficient evidence to

ing — unless another's smoke — are difficult to study and both the Japanese study and the cancer society study may be inadequate, Garfinkel noted.

Autopsy studies of lung tissue in non-smokers "have uncovered virtually signs of lesions usually recognized precancerous," he said. Therefore, passive smoking "cannot play more than a small role in the development of

health hazard of smoking cigarettes. It's too early for any kind of clear-cut conclusion (about cancer)."

FROM CIGARETTES

2nd-Hand Smoke Risk Discounted

SEATTLE (UPI) — Non-smoking wives of smokers run no more risk of lung cancer than non-smoking women married to non-smoking men.

Lawrence Garfinkel, of New York, the American Cancer Society's vice president for epidemiology and statistics, says second-hand cigarette smoke appears to

Study Downplays Nonsmoker Risk

WASHINGTON (AP) — Non-smoking women whose husbands smoke have little if any more chance of contracting lung cancer than women whose husbands don't smoke, a new American Cancer Society study concluded Friday.

The study, prepared by epidemiologist Lawrence Garfinkel, is insufficient evidence so far to conclude that

the non-smokers.

Garfinkel's conclusions of a well-known study released in January. He claimed to have proved that non-smoking women whose husbands smoked developed

higher rates than those with non-smoking husbands. Each of them concluded he had

error that invalidated his conclusions. By his work, Garfinkel said, he had

discounted a different problem in passive smoking. He may be overlooking biological differences of cigarette-smoking men. While

Garfinkel said, "passive smoking in nonsmoking women should be specifically studied as accurately as possible." He said that by Hira's study, Garfinkel said, "from the cancer society's findings, from 1969 to 1972 and from the

New study contradicts non-smokers' risk

WASHINGTON (AP) — Non-smoking women whose husbands smoke have little if any more chance of contracting lung cancer than if their husbands don't smoke, a new American Cancer Society study concluded Friday.

The study, prepared by epidemiologist Lawrence Garfinkel, found there is insufficient evidence so far to conclude that passive smoking — non-smokers inhaling

near smokers — is a hazard to non-smokers.

The results contradict the conclusions of a well-publicized Japanese study released in January.

A Japanese researcher said he had proved that non-smoking wives whose husbands smoked developed lung cancer at a much greater rate than those with non-smoking husbands. Some questions

have been raised about the Japanese study.

Garfinkel wrote in the June issue of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute: "To obtain data on passive smoking in non-smoking women, an epidemiological study should be specifically designed to measure their exposure as accurately as possible." Neither the research done by himself or by Hira's study is structured to give that result, Garfinkel said.

Several months ago, headlines around the world trumpeted alarming news. A Japanese study was claiming that non-smoking wives of smokers had a higher risk of lung cancer because of their husbands' tobacco smoke. That scared a lot of people and understandably so, if this claim was the last word.

But now new headlines have appeared. First, because several eminent biostatisticians found an apparent statistical error in the Japanese calculations—raising serious questions about the study.

Second, because Lawrence Garfinkel, the statistical director of the American Cancer Society who is opposed to smoking, published a report covering 17 years and nearly 200,000 people in which he indicated that "second-hand" smoke has insignificant effect on lung cancer rates in nonsmokers.

If you'd like to know more about these developments, write Scientific Division, The Tobacco Institute, 1875 I St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

BEFORE YOU BELIEVE HALF THE STORY, GET THE WHOLE STORY.

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built up against the United States across the board. But I should like to express a partial disagreement with Mr. Podhoretz's views on Communist states at large (as opposed to the Soviet imperialist version of Communism). He says that "not a single country has ever broken free once the Communist yoke has been forced onto its neck." I venture to suggest that this assertion is a misleading oversimplification. What was happening in Czechoslovakia during the "Prague Spring" but a voluntary dismantling of the totalitarian apparatus imposed by military force on a nation which had had a strong indigenous democratic tradition at the end of World War II? The Russians themselves made it perfectly clear that this was the reason they felt themselves compelled to intervene. They are, in my opinion, making it equally clear at the moment of writing that they forbid the Poles to revert to political pluralism under pain (as with the Czechs) of suppression by military force. I also suggest that the much earlier case of Hungary in 1956 fell into the same pattern.

This brings up the subject of the remarkable political fluidity in present-day China. I would concede that it is premature to argue that China is in the process of abandoning totalitarian Communism, in both its political and economic aspects. But the trends, at least in economics, are sufficiently encouraging, if not downright astonishing, to avoid any final judgment on the process for the immediate future. The possibility still exists that China may give up hard-line Communism on its own initiative.

Then there is "Eurocommunism." Again, this is a far from unequivocal phenomenon, and there may be some leaders who assume its mantle out of pure opportunism. But, again, it demonstrates that Communism not enforced by Soviet military strength is not immutable. . . .

On the other hand, I must concede that Communist regimes emerging in the Third World (like Cuba and Vietnam) mostly appear to be very willing to serve as the Soviets' hatchetmen. So some political discernment must be brought to bear on any evaluation of "independent" Communist regimes.

Having expressed these disagreements, I can only offer humble support for Mr. Podhoretz's basic thesis, that the United States must,

as vigorously as possible, reestablish the military force needed to contain the Soviet Union until it is tripped up by its own internal "contradictions." But the risk exists that it is already too late.

R. J. FRIEDLAND
Johannesburg, South Africa

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Disbelief, anger, and anxiety . . . were the emotions evoked in me by the letters on Norman Podhoretz's article published in your August issue.

"Russian imperialism," "self-determination" of the "oppressed nations" in the Soviet Union, "*Realpolitik*," and more of the same old stuff of the past 60 years, stuff that has again and again been proven . . . to be bankrupt and fruitless. What better proof of such bankruptcy—if more was needed—than . . . Walter Laqueur's article on the situation in Holland ["*Hollanditis*"] that follows the remarks of your correspondents in the very same issue! . . .

The struggle is between power hunger . . . and disdain for individual freedom on the one side, and respect for individual freedom and the limitation of power by law . . . on the other side, namely the West. The struggle is between values and not between nations or peoples. It is not a matter of geography. There is, in principle, no difference between the Communism of East Germany, Ethiopia, Soviet Union, Tanzania, or Cuba—the flow of refugees is a one-way street globally.

One cannot possibly treat rationally a disease through a diagnosis based on preconceived ideas or wishful thinking. I believe that the unwillingness to interpret facts in the light of actual experience and present-day reality is the cause of our inability to face the future danger with confidence.

IGOR F. NIKISHIN
Canton, Ohio

Women's Blessings

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In regard to George Jochnowitz's article, " . . . Who Made Me a Woman" [April], I would suggest that the reading of the Roth Manuscript No. 32 offers nothing more consequential than a scribe's error, where the word "*non*" was omitted from a sentence that should have read " . . . *ke non fis me fena*." To build an extensive hypothesis on

the absence of the word "*non*" is as sensible as to build an analogous hypothesis on the absence of the word "*not*" in the "*Wicked Bible*." As the author himself avers, we are dealing with a slavishly literal translation of Hebrew into the vernacular at a time when the modern version of the form of this blessing for women was by the author's own words just coming into acceptance. Since translations of this nature were admittedly widely used by males also, a scribe's mistake is much more likely than a speculative innovation which cannot be documented from any other source.

I would also like to suggest that the transliteration "*Shuadit*" should perhaps more properly start with the letter "*J*" to give a more valid rendition of both the putative pronunciation of this term and of its origin.

A. JOSEPH BERLAU
Hartsdale, New York

GEORGE JOCHNOWITZ writes:

Whether or not males used Roth Manuscript 32 as a prayerbook, it was unambiguously written to be used by a woman. All the adjectives and nouns that refer to the person praying are in the feminine gender. The blessing " . . . *ke fis mi fena*" is preceded by " . . . *ke non fis mi serventa* [feminine]" and " . . . *ke non fis mi goya* [feminine]." A. Joseph Berlau's reading could work only if it were grammatically possible for the blessing in question to be said by a man.

The spellings "*Shuadit*" and "*Chuadit*" are standard for the name of this language. Max Weinreich and other scholars of Jewish interlinguistics have consistently used them. The Hebrew letter *yod* in initial position was always pronounced *sh* in *Shuadit*. Thus the word for "wine" was *shayin* rather than *yayin*. I discuss this curious sound change at some length in an article, "*Shuadit: la langue juive de Provence*," which appeared in *Archives juives* (1978).

I am grateful, though, to Mr. Berlau for raising these questions, which may have troubled other readers as well.

The Palestine Question

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Menahem Milson is a notable Arabist, and much of what he says in "How to Make Peace with the Palestinians" [May] reflects considerable expertise. Certainly I think

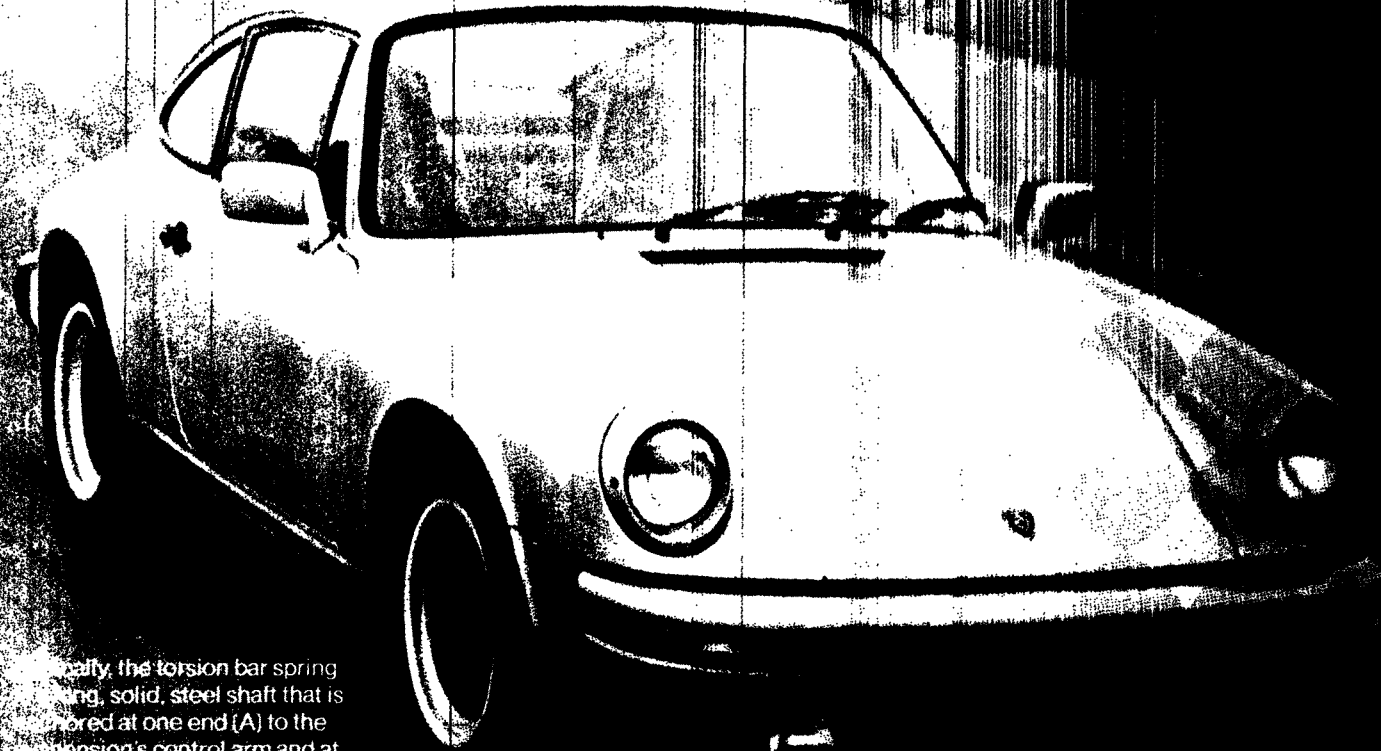


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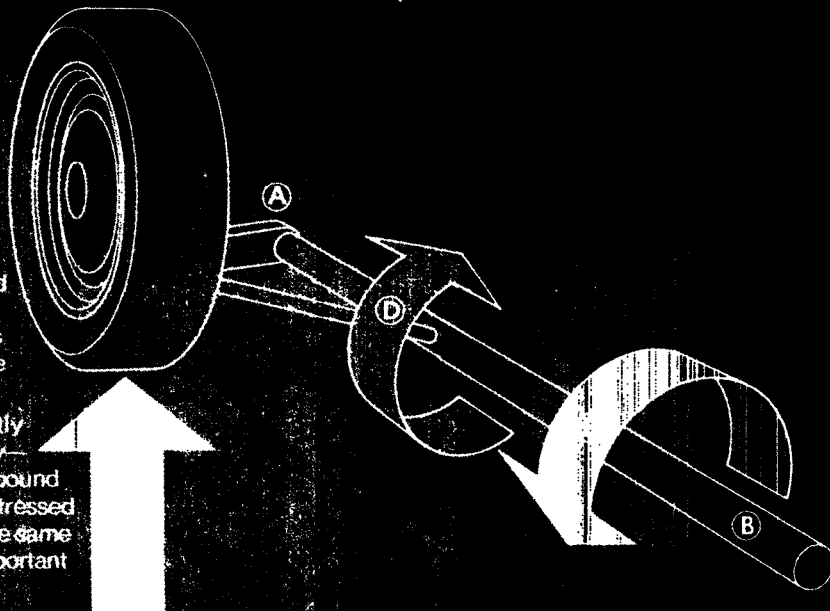
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it difficult to gainsay his conclusion that America and Israel must "make a real effort to create conditions in which moderate Palestinians can speak out" if "the chances of peace between Israel and the Arabs and the chances of a pro-Western strategic alliance" in the region are not to "remain seriously impaired."

I confess, though: it astonishes me to find such a statement in a ten-page essay which never once mentions the West Bank-Gaza settlement policies pursued by successive Israeli governments since 1967. To what extent have these policies (which, it is too easy to forget, antedate the Likud government) made for conditions subversive of moderate Palestinian opinion?

STANLEY F. CHYET
Director, Magnin School of
Graduate Studies
Hebrew Union College-Jewish
Institute of Religion
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I applaud the very perceptive article by Menahem Milson for its comprehensive analysis of the Palestinian situation. His evaluation of the role of the PLO in and out of the territories is factual and in perspective, but I would like to add to his analysis.

Mr. Milson points out that the PLO is adamant—"intransigent"—about negotiating, but does not adequately consider the important factor behind this position. The PLO is the core of a structure of international terrorism supported totally by the Soviets. Since instability in the Middle East serves Soviet purposes, the PLO will not act contrary to its arms-supplier's purpose by agreeing to negotiate any kind of a peaceful arrangement with Israel.

Mr. Milson rightly says that a practical and feasible way to create conditions which will settle the disputes involved in the Palestinian situation is "by freeing the population of the territories from the grip of the PLO." But how can this be done in practical terms? . . .

Those who know, understand that the PLO does not represent the aspirations of Palestinian Arabs, and in fact it has killed many Palestinians who opposed it. As President Reagan said of the PLO, "Who elected them?" . . .

In my view, the political strategy should be to divide the Palestinian

situation into two issues: (1) a legitimate refugee issue, to be dealt with in terms of the people living in Israel now unable to protect themselves from exploitation by the PLO, and the people living elsewhere, such as in Lebanon—all pawns in an Arab factional struggle; and (2) the PLO issue, to be dealt with by considering the PLO as part of an international terrorist organization serving Soviet purposes under the guise of serving the Palestinian cause. As Mr. Milson points out, it makes no sense for any nation to agree to PLO demands; if it does, it unwittingly supports Soviet objectives.

There is one other point I hope Mr. Milson will explain: why do Hussein, the Saudis, and others support the PLO despite the fact that the PLO has kidnapped, assassinated, and intimidated their own people? If their support is a response to blackmail, as I believe it is, then such blackmail must be based on the ability of the PLO to utilize the structure of international terrorism in a way other Arabs fear. If this is so, the objective of the Israeli political campaign against PLO domination in the territories suggested by Mr. Milson should be expanded to include a U.S. political campaign against PLO "domination" over other Arab entities. Then, indeed, a strong pro-Western strategic alliance in the Middle East for the benefit of all would be possible.

ALBERT BENGUIAT
Kennewick, Washington

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . For twenty years, the Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza were virtual prisoners of Jordan and Egypt; they lived behind barbed wire. . . . Yet during those twenty years, no one—not in the Arab countries or in the world in general—talked about human rights or autonomy for these people. As usual, there is a different set of rules where Israel is concerned.

PLO money, about \$150 million a year, now flows into the West Bank. This money, along with threats, intimidation, and murder are what make the PLO the "representative" of the people of the West Bank and Gaza. Yasir Arafat's only reason for existence is the factory for murder he runs, which has now expanded throughout the world as well as in the Arab states. Moreover, King Hussein of Jordan

now gets \$1.2 billion a year—not to make peace.

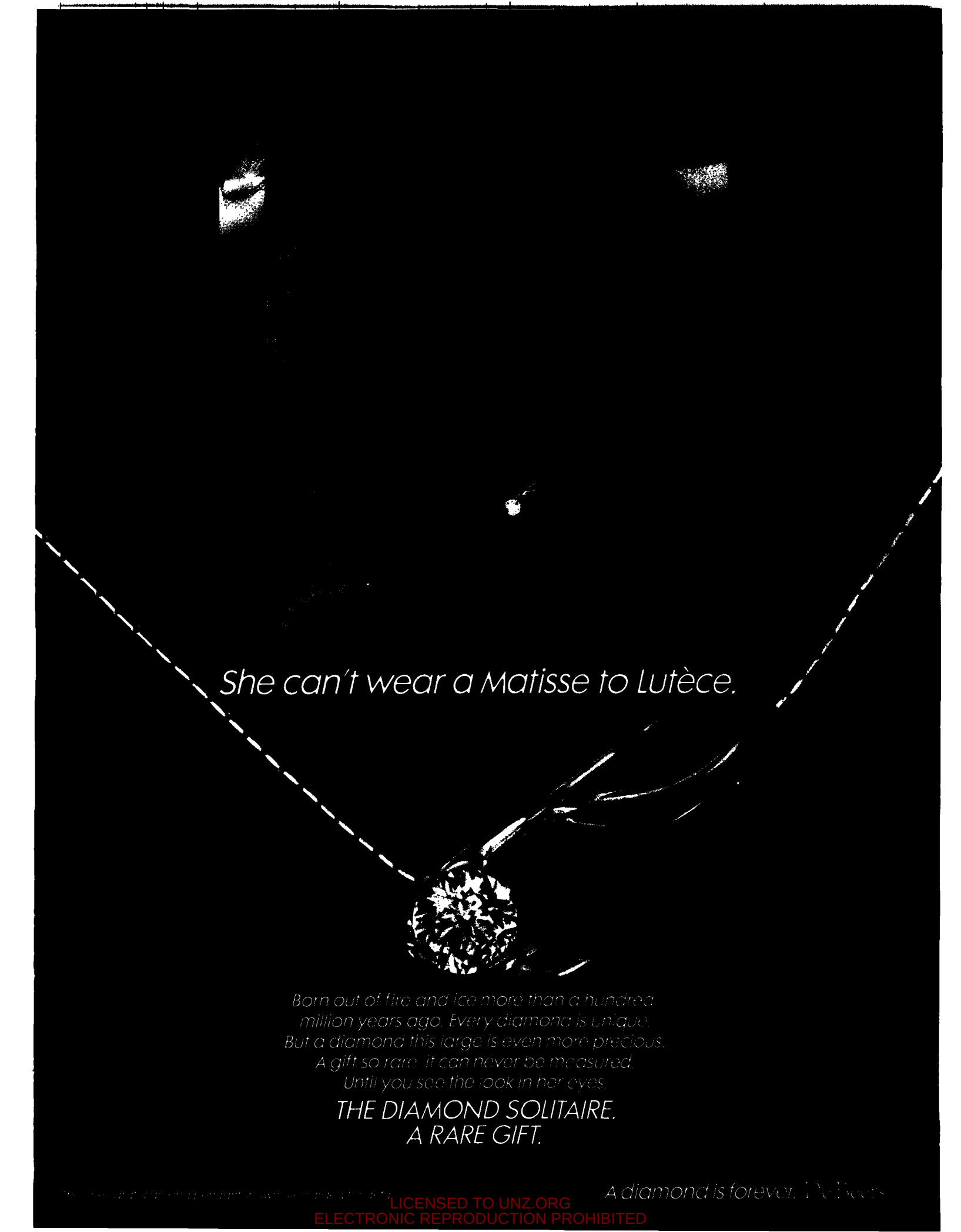
The West Bank and Gaza are *an internal affair of Israel*. These territories should never have been permitted by any Israeli government to become the subject of negotiations between Egypt and Israel. The territories are part of the area Israel was promised fifty years ago to be part of its state; they were acquired in wars which were started against Israel. Around the world, from Cyprus to Cambodia . . . examples could be given of sovereign states refusing to negotiate over their own territories. As usual, the hypocrisy of the world toward the Jews is shown in the fact that the internal affairs of Israel, where human rights and autonomy flourish as nowhere else in the entire Arab world, have become a subject of worldwide debate.

In his last paragraph, Menahem Milson says: "Unless the U.S. and Israel make a real effort to create conditions in which moderate Palestinians can speak out, both the chances of peace between Israel and the Arabs and the chances of a pro-Western strategic alliance in the Middle East will remain seriously impaired." . . . This reminds me of a book I once read on economics; after about 500 pages of various kinds of economic budget theories, the writer said, "If none of these things work, you will have to reduce your expenses or increase your income." . . .

Obviously what needs to be done is to have the U.S. give Israel its total, dedicated support. But if the U.S. cannot even get Syria (the Soviets' surrogate) out of Lebanon, how much faith can anyone have in its ability to do anything anywhere else in the world where the Soviets decide to move? . . .

Whatever government is in office in Israel, it must bring to a complete halt any further discussion of the West Bank and Gaza and also stop the money coming into Israel to bribe and intimidate the people of Israel. . . . As Israeli citizens, the Arabs would then be protected from the terror that is now on their doorstep, and the U.S. should approve Israel's move in this direction. Israel is, after all, the front line against the Soviet takeover of the Middle East and Africa. . . . What other country has proved itself as an ally as well as Israel?

A. S. EPSTEIN
Publisher, *The Times of Israel*
Beverly Hills, California



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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Menahem Milson's thought-provoking article on the Israel-Palestine problem raises a number of questions which must be seen, ultimately, as undermining an otherwise imposing edifice.

1. Since Jordan is well on its way to becoming a Palestinian state, the dreaded revanchist and irredentist state will soon be at Israel's doorstep willy-nilly. Similarly, in light of this development, the distinction between "moderate" (i.e., Jordan-oriented) versus "radical" (i.e., independence-oriented) Palestinian politics loses much of its validity.

2. The best illustration of what Mr. Milson calls the "politics of perceived constraints" coexisting with millenary-radical ideology is Syria between 1949 and 1967, for whom Palestine was and remains "southern Syria." Why should such a configuration be precluded *a priori* in the case of a haplessly sundered Palestinian mini-state on a (truncated) West Bank and Gaza Strip?

3. The biggest losers in any Israeli-Arab military confrontation have been, and will continue to be, the Palestinian Arab population. This was true in 1948 and 1967. (The 1973 war is the exception that proves the rule: had Jordan attempted to recapture the West Bank, the latter would today have a very different complexion, demographic and otherwise.) It follows that if the leadership of a midsize Palestinian state should succumb to the millenary temptation, its fate, and that of its people, would hardly differ from that of Jewish millenarians throughout the ages.

BARUCH MARGALIT

University of Haifa
Haifa, Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Menahem Milson's description of the failure of the Israel-U.S. efforts to convince West Bank leaders to enter the Camp David process merits close attention. However, it might lead some readers astray about the attitudes of organizations like American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). Mr. Milson writes that the refusal of West Bank mayors to meet U.S. diplomats Alfred Atherton and Harold Saunders must have been the greatest disappointment for the Americans, because for years these mayors had been "cultivated" by U.S. representatives

and materially supported by organizations like ANERA and AFSC. But ANERA and AFSC oppose Camp David. The ANERA library in Washington dispenses a full line of pro-PLO-anti-Israel material. Rael Jean Isaac (*Midstream*, November 1979) describes the functioning of these and similar organizations and their relationship to the PLO. She covers the failure of the Saunders-Atherton effort to discuss Camp David with West Bank Arabs: Of the fifty invited, a small number came, none of them close to AFSC, ANERA, or similar organizations.

These organizations exemplify the "paradoxical phenomenon" sketched by Mr. Milson which regards extremist West Bank spokesmen as "genuine and honest" and moderates as "insincere." ANERA material support is augmented by its role as director of U.S. government-financed projects on the West Bank. Rael Jean Isaac writes that such funding is used "... to build up a PLO leadership cadre, since only avowed PLO sympathizers can obtain money."

ANERA and AFSC were not disappointed when West Bank leaders avoided even meeting Saunders and Atherton. If U.S. government officials were disappointed, they do not understand what these American-supported foundations do. More likely the outcome was expected. Some U.S. officials in East Jerusalem are quite sympathetic with AFSC- and ANERA-type organizations. So in fact the "disappointment" served the policy inclination of U.S. officials who are not sympathetic to the Camp David process.

JOSEPH LERNER

Takoma Park, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Menahem Milson... does an excellent job of analyzing the present political impasse and the reasons for the PLO rejection of Camp David. His description of PLO terror on the West Bank is both accurate and insightful. His recommendations of the necessary prerequisites for negotiations are correct, if difficult to achieve by a democracy trying to maintain a politically neutral occupation. However, these measures would not be any stricter than the repression that has been made necessary... since April 1976 by the Arab insurrection and the activities of the Palestinian Guidance Council. Mr. Mil-

son does fail to deal with the substance of a peace treaty with Jordan, a subject very aptly handled by Shai Feldman in "Israel's Security" (*Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1981). Though I agree with Feldman's analysis of the present political situation and of the security measures needed to safeguard a treaty, I agree with Mr. Milson in preferring Jordan as a partner in negotiations to the intransigent PLO. Taken together, the two articles represent the basis for a new American-Israeli peace initiative under the Reagan administration....

THOMAS G. MITCHELL

Madison, Wisconsin

MENAHEM MILSON writes:

A. S. Epstein's statement, "The West Bank and Gaza are an *internal affair of Israel*" is, I take it, an affirmation of the way he would have wished things to be, but that just is not how things are. Wishes, alas, cannot substitute for an assessment of facts. Mr. Epstein must remember with all of us that the question of the West Bank and Gaza, along with other problems outstanding between Israel and its Arab neighbors, was the subject of negotiations among Israel, Egypt, and the U.S. at Camp David. When the Israeli parliament ratified the Camp David accords by an overwhelming majority, it implicitly announced that Israel did not view the question of the West Bank and Gaza as an internal affair. According to the Camp David accords to which Israel is committed, it cannot unilaterally decide the permanent status of the West Bank and Gaza. On the other hand, Mr. Epstein is right in demanding that the flow of PLO patronage money into the West Bank and Gaza should be stopped and that the Arab population of these territories should be protected from PLO intimidation and terror.

Stanley F. Chyet's disapproving reference to my article as "a ten-page essay which never once mentions the West Bank-Gaza settlement policies" gives me the impression that he might have skipped the paragraph I devoted to this issue (on p. 27). However, the answer to Mr. Chyet's question, "To what extent have these [settlement] policies... made for conditions subversive of moderate Palestinian opinion?" is that the settlements—no matter how one views them ideologically—had very

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little to do with the political decline of moderate Arab personalities in the West Bank and Gaza. The problem of the settlements is admittedly at the core of an important political and ideological controversy, in and outside of Israel, but that is not the subject at hand. Indeed, one of the demerits of the settlement policy is that it has become a red herring for those who seek to blame Israel for difficulties in the peace process and to whitewash the intransigence of the PLO.

It can be quite baffling to deal briefly with arguments which combine factually mistaken assumptions with fallacious reasoning. I will try nonetheless to deal with Baruch Margalit's points.

First, I wonder what Mr. Margalit means in saying "Jordan is well on its way to becoming a Palestinian state." If he is merely restating the fact, mentioned in my article, that Jordan's population is about 60 percent of West-Palestinian origin, then the rest of his proposition simply does not follow. Or is he suggesting that Jordan is about to be taken over by the PLO? Experts well informed in the affairs of the Middle East do not have an inkling of such a supposedly impending development, which Mr. Margalit assumes in a cavalier fashion. On the strength of what evidence does he make such a prediction? Of course, one is always entitled to speculate. Let's then speculate a bit further on this assumption: if a revanchist Palestinian regime comes to power in Amman, various developments may follow. One thing, however, is certain: no Israeli government could then be expected to hand over to such a regime any part of the West Bank. Furthermore, whatever Mr. Margalit may have intended on his supposition, the distinction between moderate and radical (which he apparently pooh-poohs) remains valid in Palestinian politics as elsewhere. To obfuscate the difference between moderates and extremists, when addressing an audience (such as the readers of COMMENTARY) who can be reasonably believed to prefer the moderates, is to render, perhaps inadvertently, a service of disinformation in the interest of the extremists.

Mr. Margalit's equation, "radical (i.e., independence-oriented)," reveals inadequate knowledge of the situation; as a matter of fact, there are some Palestinian personalities

who are both unquestionably moderate and independence-oriented. The best publicly known example of this type of political position in the West Bank is the Ramallah lawyer Aziz Shehadeh.

Mr. Margalit seems equally ill-informed about Syria, which he chooses to adduce as "the best illustration" to support his second argument. Contrary to his assumption, not one of the Syrian governments between 1949 and 1967 claimed that Palestine was southern Syria. Mr. Margalit may be unaware that the slogan "Palestine is southern Syria" was, in fact, invented and used by Palestinian (not Syrian) politicians between 1918 and 1922, after which period it was abandoned and all but disappeared. It is therefore totally irrelevant to the point he may have wished to present.

Mr. Margalit seems to favor the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza as a solution to the conflict between Israel and Palestinian Arabs. Believing apparently that what stands in the way of this solution is the Israeli wariness of such a state, Mr. Margalit attempts to assuage Israeli worries by describing it as "a midget Palestinian state" and "a haplessly sundered Palestinian state on a (truncated) West Bank and Gaza Strip." Does Mr. Margalit also believe that the prospect of a midget Palestinian state ("haplessly sundered," etc.) as he describes it will be so attractive to the PLO that it will give up its repeatedly declared commitment to "liquidate the Zionist entity"? It is strange that he does not seem to recall the PLO's resolution "to fight against any plan of a Palestinian entity if its price should be recognition [of Israel], peace [with Israel], secure boundaries, etc." (section 3 of the resolutions of the 12th Palestinian National Council).

In reply to Thomas G. Mitchell: In recent years, many plans for a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians have been put forward by academics and politicians. Not a few of these proposals consist of very detailed blueprints of boundaries, demilitarization arrangements and other security guarantees, regional economic development projects, etc. According to one type of such plans, Jordan must play a key role in a prospective peace settlement; according to another, Jordan should be out of

the picture. In the current political lingo, the former type comes under the label of "Jordanian option" and the latter, "Palestinian option." For all the differences among these plans of both kinds, they have one thing in common: they are inevitably destined to be shelved until Palestinians or Jordanians are willing to negotiate peace with Israel. Hence, what is urgently needed is to discern what it is that holds back both Palestinians and Jordanians from negotiating peace with Israel, and what can be done to remove that obstacle. This is the main point of my article. To draw at this stage yet another, more or less ingenious, blueprint is quite futile. Mr. Mitchell will excuse me, I hope, for declining to engage in what is at present an irrelevant though quite popular academic diversion.

Corporate Ethics

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to react to a few of the points raised by Leslie Lenkowsky in his review of the book Thornton Bradshaw and I edited, *Corporations and Their Critics* [Books in Review, May].

He is correct in criticizing the modern liberal concept of corporate social responsibility on the grounds that it is vague and open-ended; it provides managers with no principle for determining which of the public's complaints against business they should respond to and which they should be encouraged to resist. Unfortunately, Mr. Lenkowsky's attempt to define the responsibility of business is equally unsatisfactory. His analysis begs the critical question: under what circumstances is it appropriate for managers to weigh non-pecuniary objectives in making business decisions? For example, should high-technology corporations consider the possible military application of their products by their satisfied customers behind the Iron Curtain? Is a company behaving inappropriately if it carefully monitors, and then discloses, possible health hazards associated with either the production or use of its products—when these are unknown to government officials? Does a company have a responsibility to ameliorate the financial hardships associated with closing down a facility in a community in which it has historically been the principal employer?

I wish Mr. Lenkowsky would de-

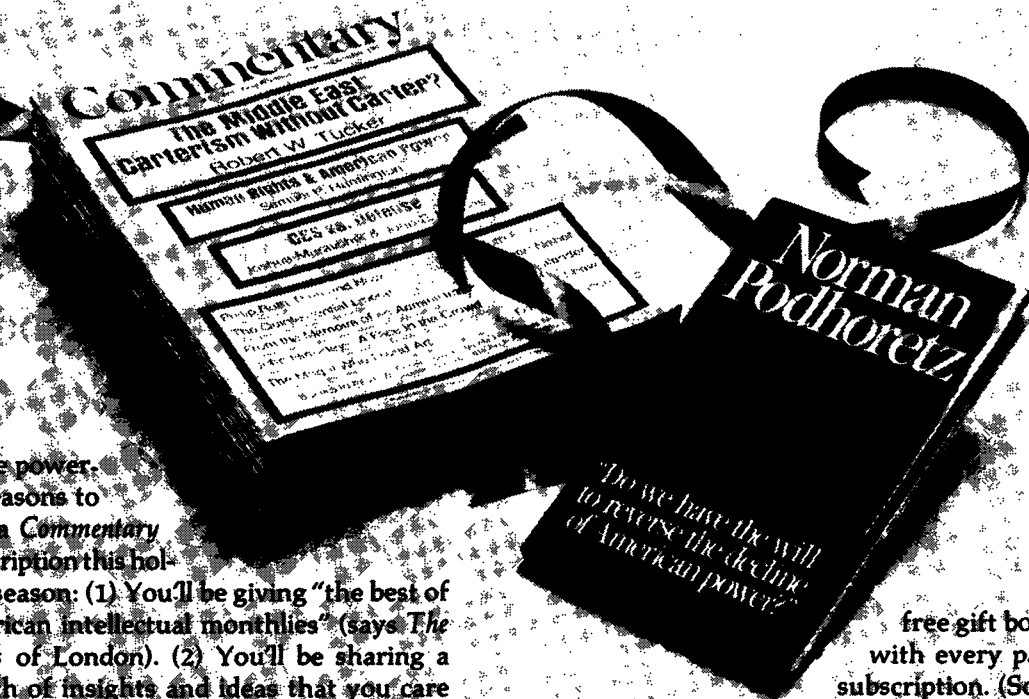
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Commentary

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scribe his criteria for judging corporate performance so that we could determine precisely which "burdens [that] companies have [or have not] assumed voluntarily" meet with his approval and which do not. Of the scores of specific examples of "corporate social responsibility" described in our book, are there any at all he judges praiseworthy? And if so, on what basis? For example, is Mr. Lenkowsky opposed to all corporate philanthropy, even when it is given to organizations whose social values he shares?

Secondly, I am eager to learn which "sweeping reforms of dubious social and economic value" have been accepted by "corporate leaders." I have followed this matter closely for nearly a decade and, with the notable exception of the legislation forbidding corporations to comply with the Arab boycott of Israel, I am hard pressed to think of any major regulatory initiative that the vast majority of affected corporations—including the larger, supposedly more "liberal" companies that comprise the Roundtable—did not oppose. Mr. Lenkowsky and I must know different business executives; I had the distinct impression that far from accepting the recent increases in government regulation, most were intensely hostile to them and thus strongly supported the Reagan administration's drive to reduce regulatory burdens. If executives are in any way responsible for the recent increase in government regulation, it is only because their own behavior has too often convinced public officials of their necessity.

Finally, Mr. Lenkowsky's assertion that "the gospel of corporate responsibility seems well-entrenched in the business schools" is misinformed. My interest and perspectives are even less representative of business-school faculty than Thornton Bradshaw's are of business executives. Mr. Lenkowsky would be well advised to take another look at the research and course offerings of the nation's major business schools. He would find precious little to offend his ideological sensibilities.

DAVID VOGEL
School of Business Administration
University of California
Berkeley, California

LESLIE LENKOWSKY writes:

David Vogel thinks I have exaggerated the influence of the views

about corporate responsibility he and his fellow contributors to *Corporations and Their Critics* advocate. Although I think I have not, I would nonetheless be delighted if Mr. Vogel were right, since the main point of my review was that these views are deeply flawed and ought not to be adhered to by businessmen. I am pleased to see that Mr. Vogel now acknowledges some of the problems in the "liberal concept of corporate social responsibility," but rather than try to summarize my own views on this admittedly complex subject, I suggest that he and other corporate critics examine the main traditions of ethics, which have much to say about how pecuniary ends ought to be weighed against other objectives. Nothing so well illustrates the political character of the corporate-social-responsibility movement as much as its near-total isolation from classical thinking about ethical behavior.

Testing

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "IQ on Trial" [June], Nathan Glazer successfully argues that in the case of *Larry P. v. Wilson Riles*, Judge Peckham was somewhat rash in his attack on the use of IQ tests for special-education placements. Clearly, IQ tests provide the potential for mischief by educators, but they are also a useful diagnostic tool which, taken together with other indicators, can help professionals and parents reach better decisions regarding the most appropriate educational setting for each child. To deny educators the use of these tests will not, as Mr. Glazer shows, reduce the potential for improper placements of minority children and, indeed, could deny to those concerned important information.

However, Mr. Glazer unfortunately leaves the reader with the distinct impression that he is not particularly disturbed about a process (whether it includes IQ tests or not) that produces a special-education population that is over 50 percent black and Mexican-American in ethnic background. While it is true, as he points out, that these figures represent only 2 to 3 percent of minority-group schoolchildren enrolled in California, such children are still three to five times more likely to be labeled as retarded than whites. Mr. Glazer tries to comfort us about this over-

representation in classes for the educable retarded by asking, "Is it not 'giving up' to leave children in classes where they are not learning at all?" Apparently Mr. Glazer feels that special-education placement is generally an intervention made with the best interests of the child in mind. Referring to the inevitable labeling of the child, he says that the term "educable mentally retarded, whatever the suggestion in its name, . . . refers to children who simply do not get anything out of regular classes—but may get something out of classes that emphasize intensive drill. . . ." This supposition is just not supported by the literature on special education for the mildly retarded. A summary of the research, presented in Lloyd Dunn's *Exceptional Children in the Schools*, indicates that special-education classes for many, if not most, of the mildly retarded cannot be justified on the grounds that they improve school achievement; children do not do better in these classes than in regular classrooms. One would have to surmise from these findings that many of the special-education placements are made for the convenience of the school and are not in the best academic interests of the child.

Further, as Mr. Glazer surely knows, there are studies by Jane Mercer demonstrating that in one school district in California almost half of the special-education placements were mislabeled because of inadequate consideration of the effects of linguistic and family background. In other words, most of these minority children do not belong in special education by any acceptable criteria of retardation and even if they did, they would not be likely to benefit from such a placement. Nonetheless, thousands of parents and children are subjected to the anguish which is associated with being labeled retarded in our society, and the future of these children is jeopardized for apparently no useful purpose. It is in this regard that I object to Mr. Glazer's presentation of the California case.

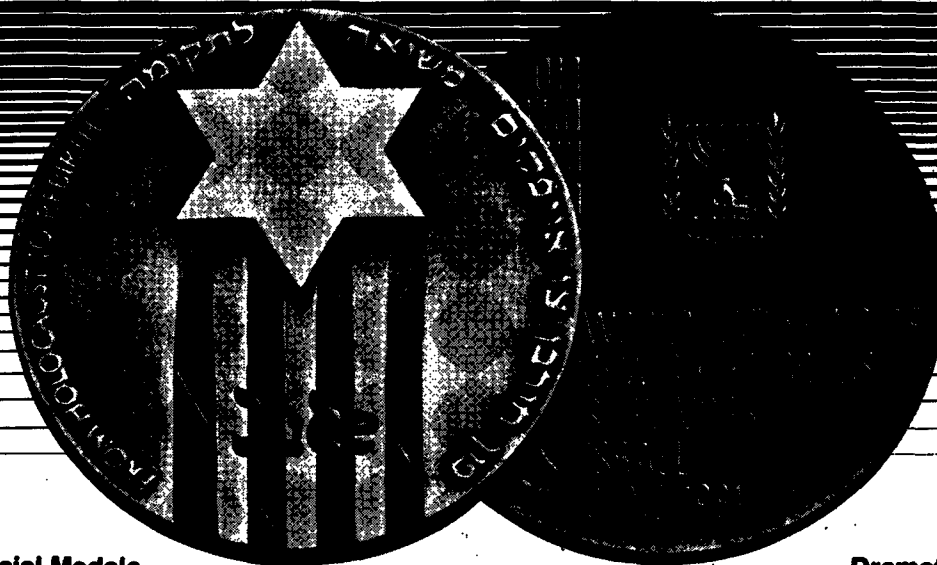
TERRY S. WEINER

Union College
Schenectady, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Nathan Glazer's reasoning is so cogent that I find it difficult to believe that Judge Peckham reached the opposite conclusion. . . . Could any evidence, however strong, have convinced Judge Peckham that IQ

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tests are not biased against blacks and that the disproportionate placement of blacks in classes for the educable mentally retarded was appropriate? I suspect not. However, the State of California might have attempted to examine the comparative validity of IQ tests for black and white youngsters. For example, within the group of *black* students assigned to EMR classes in San Francisco, was performance in the class closely related to scores in measured IQ? Similarly, within the group of *white* students assigned to EMR classes in San Francisco, was performance in the class closely related to scores in measured IQ? The same type of comparison might have been made for black and white students who tested low on IQ measures but not low enough to justify assignment to EMR classes. Was their subsequent performance closely related to the scores they obtained on the IQ tests? That is to say, the issues are: (1) whether IQ tests predict subsequent academic performance; and (2) whether IQ tests predict as well for blacks as for white children.

Most previous criticisms of IQ tests and Scholastic Aptitude Tests have been addressed to these two issues. Specifically, critics argue that such tests are poor predictors of subsequent academic performance and that previous grades or personal interviews or letters of recommendation are better predictors; they also argue that, however well the tests predict subsequent academic performance for whites, they do not work as well for blacks. It seems to me that the evidence from such organizations as the Educational Testing Service does not support these arguments, but they are at least germane to the issue of bias. Judge Peckham's central concern—that more blacks than whites get classified as retarded—has only tangential relevance to the issue of test bias.

JACKSON TOBY

Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

007 & the Cold War

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Richard Grenier's pompous, humorless, inaccurate article "Updating James Bond" [June], uses the word "idiotic" to describe the plot of *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. That adjective more aptly reflects his account of it, which bears no re-

semblance to the plots of either Fleming's novel or my screenplay. In both the book and the movie Bond slept with two, not ten girls in an effort to secure information about the villain's projected caper to destroy the world's food supply unless he was granted a title and immunity from past crimes. Bond was certainly not inoculated with an infectious virus to pass on to his sexual conquests. Post-hypnotically programmed by the villain, these women were to use simple atomizers filled with various micro-biologic parasites. Did Mr. Grenier ever read the book or see the film? He calls it a failure despite the fact that it grossed \$32 million worldwide, a figure seldom attained by a motion picture at that time. As for critical reaction to the film, Charles Champlin, the astute Los Angeles *Times* reviewer, called it "by a long shot the very best of the Bonds."

So much for *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. As the writer or co-writer of nine "007" screenplays, including the first four and about thirty-five other motion pictures and numerous stage plays, I know that talking back to an important critic is a strictly no-win situation. . . . But in this instance Mr. Grenier has made so many misstatements of fact I feel I must risk it.

Mr. Grenier has every right to feel the Bond movies have been soft on détente. I assume that is the thrust of his article (if it has one). However I want to set the film record straight.

Dr. No was equally resentful of the United States and Russia for failing to appreciate his genius. Mr. Grenier's mention of Cuba's proximity to Crab Key island as somehow being significant in this film is very far-fetched. The only evil Russian involved in *From Russia With Love* was the defector Rosa Klebb. Tatiana was not actually a KGB disinformation agent, as Mr. Grenier states, but a gullible girl in love with the idea of James Bond. Klebb manipulated her, and other Russians, for SPECTRE, not SMERSH. The murderous Red Grant is not revealed to be a Russian, certainly not in the screenplay. Goldfinger's main purpose in radiating the gold of Fort Knox (an additional wrinkle added in the film) was to increase the value of his own gold holdings. He needed a "particularly dirty bomb" so he got it from the Red Chinese, who, before Nixon's visit, wanted

financial panic in the West. A *quid pro quo* arrangement. In *Thunderball*, Mr. Grenier makes much of Bond's sidekick, Felix Leiter of the CIA. But who else in the United States should Bond work with while on a mission? Perry Mason? And U.S. "Aquaparatroops (whatever they are)" constitute an actual specially trained frogman-paratrooper unit stationed at that time in Orlando, Florida.

The Spy Who Loved Me incurs Mr. Grenier's displeasure because of Bond's relationship with a beautiful Russian agent. He thinks the film must have caused Fleming to roll over in his grave because Fleming was unaffectedly anti-Soviet. Mr. Grenier should read one of Fleming's short stories, "The Living Daylights," in which Bond finds himself pitted against another crack marksman, another lovely Russian agent of breathtaking proportions. Clearly Fleming recognized that Bond was susceptible to them whatever the nationality of the female so alluringly endowed.

What puzzles me most about Mr. Grenier is that he takes the Bond films much too seriously. They are essentially escapist adventure comedies designed for thrills and laughs. He also seems to forget that détente was and to some extent still is the policy of many Western governments. What is Mr. Grenier's alternative? The atomic destruction of Russia? If it is, he has surpassed even the wildest, most maniacal dreams of all the evil Fleming villains put together. I am now back to the use of the word "idiotic."

RICHARD MAIBAUM

Pacific Palisades, California

RICHARD GRENIER writes:

Richard Maibaum causes me some embarrassment. Here I affirm to all and sundry that the motion pictures are the "class act" of the dramatic arts, and he writes a letter of such blazing incoherence as to cast the deepest suspicion on my thesis. He says that I "seem to forget" that détente was the policy of many Western governments, when a main point of my piece was just how faithfully the James Bond series has followed the shifts of public mood in the West regarding the Soviet Union, particularly during détente. He fights me grimly on a series of trivial points which in no way alter the fundamental burden of my article. And he announces that what puzzles him most about me is that I take the Bond films

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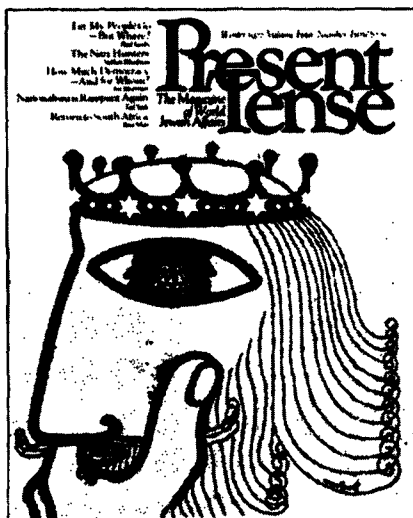
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On renewed interest in Judaica among young Americans: "The young people perceived themselves as survivors of the failures of Jewish education and the false values of America." Sylvia Rothchild.

On Israel's Nature Reserves: "It may be that General Yoffe's animals will somehow lead the people of the Middle East to peace one day. But the tanks were in the mountains, waiting. The real beast in the desert was still man." Robert Spero.



On being a Jewish poet: "The truest Jewish poetry will be written out of the inward preoccupations of people who happen to be Jews." M. L. Rosenthal.

On the Persian Gulf arms race: "The ramifications of what is happening... extend from the Caspian Sea to the Suez Canal and from the African Coast to Pakistan." Tad Szulc.

On Israel's Arab intellectuals: "I am an Israeli but I cannot be a Jew."
Naomi Shepherd.

On American foreign policy:
"American companies, which for

so long we have considered 'our companies,' have in fact become the policing agents of the Arabs' boycott against the U.S.'" Paul Dickson.

On South Africa: "To live with such a system of laws, with certificates of racial purity, with leaders who admired Hitler, to live in South Africa as a Jew and to be silent and happy takes some special skills." Rose Moss.

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"much too seriously," while plainly acknowledging that both he and the series have enthusiastically espoused the détente policy, thereby deftly kicking the ball through his own goal and demonstrating that beneath all the "thrills" and "laughs" his films contain serious ideas after all.

I am absolutely appalled, I must add, that Mr. Maibaum should think the only alternative to détente is the "atomic destruction of Russia," and fear that in this matter, as perhaps in others, he is more ignorant of public affairs than the average citizen of this country. This is hardly the place to begin Mr. Maibaum's education in world events, but I would suggest that, if interested, he might make some effort to find out who first introduced this curious French word *détente* into our lexicon, who later supported détente as policy, and what these gentlemen now think of it: whether it succeeded, in short, or failed. He has the members of at least three earlier administrations to choose from. As for the alternative to détente, does Mr. Maibaum feel that the overwhelming majorities of both houses of Congress that recently approved the new defense budget were voting for the atomic destruction of Russia? If so, he really is a slow learner.

Regarding the inaccuracies in my article: In *From Russia With Love*, Mr. Maibaum insists, Tatiana was a "gullible girl in love with the idea of James Bond." He might be interested to learn that in the official plot synopsis of the film she is identified as a false defector and a "willing tool of her government (the USSR)." Mr. Maibaum maintains that in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* James Bond slept with only two, not ten girls. This is all somewhat ridiculous, but since Mr. Maibaum forces me, the official plot synopsis reads: Bond "is required in the line of duty to spend one night with each of the ten international beauties Blofeld has assembled. Through them he means to send a virus back to their homelands to destroy all vegetable life!" And so on. Mr. Maibaum cannot seriously think it much damages my analysis that I omitted his "simple atomizers filled with various micro-biologic parasites." Or with these micro-biologic parasites, is he nailing his intellectual colors to the mast? Perhaps they are intended to prove to the world that his plot is not idiotic. If *On Her Majesty's Se-*

cret Service was such a great success, why were the producers so desperately anxious to dump its star, poor George Lazenby, and to offer such huge financial incentives to win back Sean Connery? But it would be tedious to rebut all of Mr. Maibaum's points, every one of which, in view of the thrust of my article, is either insignificant, incoherent, or false.

And I am still trying to understand how James Bond's susceptibility to beauties of "breathtaking proportions" and "alluringly endowed" females of whatever nationality, even Russian, can be construed by Mr. Maibaum as validating a sense of such friendship and unity of purpose with the Soviet Union as to bring Bond to ally himself with the KGB, no matter how alluringly its officers are endowed.

In sum, there is not a word in Mr. Maibaum's letter which refutes my central point that the James Bond series—developed from the work of Ian Fleming, a true monument of anti-Communism—"can have had few equals in obliterating from the popular culture the idea that our society might actually have a powerful and dangerous adversary." His letter itself, of course, is passably good evidence of the quality of mind of those responsible for this achievement.

Now that I am acquainted with Mr. Maibaum's credo—that the only alternative to détente is nuclear war—I can only marvel, incidentally, at his latest offering, which I had not yet seen when I wrote my article.

For Your Eyes Only is crawling with murderous Cuban and East German hit men. In it the KGB is extremely eager to procure a device that can destroy Britain in a nuclear holocaust. Does Mr. Maibaum know what he has written? Is this the wonderful détente he's defending? Does he have his head screwed on right? In the movie's penultimate scene, when James Bond has foiled the chief of the KGB and prevented the lethal device from falling into his hands, Bond says with a sardonic smile, "It's détente, comrade. I don't have it. You don't have it." If this remark means anything at all it means that the Soviet Union must not, under cover of détente, seek military dominance over the West. That is our meaning of détente. If it is not the Soviet Union's, then all bets are off. This is a very popular and

widespread view these days, as some part of Mr. Maibaum's mind must realize, which is why he wrote it into his movie. It is obvious from his letter that he did this in a spirit of simple opportunism. His heart, it would appear, was not in it.

In Pursuit of Papa

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Kenneth S. Lynn's "Hemingway's Private War" [July] is yet another unfortunate example of what happens to scholars who venture out of their own fields—in this case, history—into the treacherous realms of psychology and literary criticism. There is little point in disputing Mr. Lynn's fatuous conclusion—that most of Hemingway's work stemmed from a violent hatred of his mother. But there is a point, I think, in trying to rescue the reputations of some of the eminent literary critics whom Mr. Lynn savages along the way.

Mr. Lynn begins by opening fire on Edmund Wilson—big game indeed. Wilson, he says, "took it upon himself to improve [Hemingway's short story "Big Two-Hearted River"] by making it more explicit." For support he cites two different opinions of Wilson's on the story. A rather strange technique. Can a critic who changes his mind about a work really be accused of trying to resolve its ambiguities?

Mr. Lynn seems to see the difficulty himself; he switches attack plans in midstream. Noting that Wilson made his first remark while he was still flirting with Marxism, and his second after he had become disillusioned with the Soviet Union, Mr. Lynn concludes that the whole affair is proof of "the extent to which [Wilson's] literary sensibility was ruled by political nausea." Perhaps this is a bit hasty. What did Wilson actually say? Well, first that Nick Adams's war experiences—"the wholesale shattering of human beings in which he has taken part"—gave him the "touch of panic" evident in "Big Two-Hearted River"; and second, that Hemingway's "whole work is a criticism of society." To claim that either remark smacks of Marxism, or disillusionment with it, is stretching things. And to adduce the remarks as evidence of Wilson's "political nausea," as Mr. Lynn does, is less an insult to Wilson's political sensibilities than to Mr. Lynn's own. . . . Mr. Lynn spots

Communist sympathizers behind every tree and is unfailingly vigilant in hunting them out. Which leads, of course, to the classic irony: Mr. Lynn accuses Wilson of precisely the offense of which he himself is guilty.

Wilson's comments on "Big Two-Hearted River," while controversial—like all good criticism—are hardly unreasonable or out of the critical mainstream. Mr. Lynn is right when he points out that World War I is never specifically mentioned in the story, but there is considerable outside evidence, from Hemingway's life and work, for the theory that Nick Adams served in the war. Besides, is Wilson's theory any more wrong-headed than Mr. Lynn's belief that "Big Two-Hearted River" was born out of Hemingway's obsessive need to escape his mother? Most literary critics wouldn't think so.

Will Mr. Lynn ever tire of picking on Malcolm Cowley? . . . He singled Cowley out for abuse in his article on Max Perkins a few years ago ["The Strange Unhappy Life of Max Perkins," December 1978] and this year's attack is a variation of the theme. Cowley, Mr. Lynn says, used his introduction to *The Viking Portable Hemingway* as a vehicle for "continuing his assault on the moral credentials of capitalist society." Never mind that Cowley wrote the essay in 1944, four years after even Mr. Lynn concedes that he had finished apologizing for the Stalinists. And never mind that most of the stories Cowley discusses are set in non-capitalist countries. Mr. Lynn still accuses Cowley of what he accused Wilson of: informing his literary criticism with political sentiment.

A weighty charge indeed. And the evidence? One passage from Cowley's essay in which he claims that "these countries [mostly foreign ones, from Hemingway's book of short stories, *In Our Time*] are presented in a strangely mortuary light. In no other writer of our time can you find such a profusion of corpses." And Cowley proceeds to reel off a long list.

This happens to be true. There really are a lot of dead bodies—and particularly disgusting ones—in *In Our Time*. But Mr. Lynn never disputes Cowley on this important point. All he says is that "it must have felt like vindication to write these words, and to append to them [a] long list of fearsome illustrations." Maybe so, but that

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hardly invalidates the passage as accurate literary criticism.

So Mr. Lynn, as he did with Wilson, shifts his tactics. Now he asks: "Was it really accurate, though, to say that Hemingway had presented France, Spain, Switzerland, the United States, and the other countries he knew as a series of hypnagogic visions?" Certainly not! My *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "hypnagogic" as "inducing or leading to sleep." I'm sure we can all agree that Hemingway's visions are anything but that. Diction aside, though, Mr. Lynn tries to boil the argument down to his old standby. "In the end," he writes, "all the credibility of [Cowley's] 'nightmares at noonday' interpretation was invested in his comments on 'Big Two-Hearted River.'"

This is simply wrong. In fact, of the "long list of fearsome illustrations" that Cowley appended to his remark on Hemingway's corpses, none comes from "Big Two-Hearted River." But grant the point for a moment. According to Mr. Lynn, the problem with Cowley's interpretation of the story is that his "Nick Adams is in far worse psychological shape than Edmund Wilson's." Well, suppose that Lynn is right and Cowley wrong; suppose that Nick Adams is not the psychological cripple Cowley and Wilson say he is. That hardly bodes well for Mr. Lynn's own theory that Nick Adams is "a man so angry at his mother that he could not even forget her when he was off on a fishing trip." And Mr. Lynn contradicts himself even more neatly later, speaking of "the malaise that underlies Nick's happiness in 'Big Two-Hearted River.'"

Mr. Lynn's critique of the Hemingway critics conspicuously fails to address the central issue—the work itself. Instead he concentrates on trying to assign political motives to the critics he disagrees with. Neither Wilson nor Cowley—nor Philip Young nor Carlos Baker nor Allen Tate, who are among the other critics Mr. Lynn takes to task for much the same reasons—had the political axe to grind that Mr. Lynn tries to put in their hands. Only Mr. Lynn himself is left holding the axe.

AARON HASPEL

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

By discounting the criticism of Edmund Wilson and Malcolm Cowley on the works of Ernest

Hemingway, Kenneth S. Lynn diminishes the man and the writer. Great literature can bear any burden, even Whitman's contradictions. Why cannot the parent-child conflict be interrelated with the wound thesis? This is exactly what Philip Young tried to do in his critical biography of Hemingway.

Wilson and Cowley were part of a generation that went off to war for fun and ideals, a new kind of "grand tour." They returned wounded, if not physically, spiritually. Marxism was only part of their critical approach to the writers of their generation. No one, for example, can fault Robert Penn Warren or the late Richard Chase for being Marxists. By expanding on the earlier critics, Warren, in his introduction to the Scribner *A Farewell to Arms*, and Chase, in his doctoral seminars that I was privileged to attend at Columbia University during the late 50's, both linked the maimed hero with the young man's initiation into society, using the wound as a yardstick by which a person could measure his capacities.

Any war veteran knows the trauma of a wound, just as he is aware of the difficulties of readjusting to civilian life after being through the abnormally accelerated life-death cycle that should naturally fill a lifespan. Can one doubt that what happened to Hemingway on the banks of the Togliamento River at age nineteen was taken lightly, as Mr. Lynn would have us believe, Hemingway's letters to his parents to the contrary?

Thirty years later, that wound always on his mind in the constant pain he bore in his knee, Hemingway describes in *Across the River and into the Trees* (a title taken from another wounded and dying man's words, General Stonewall Jackson) how Colonel Cantwell was wounded. "Finally he did get hit properly and for good. No one of his wounds has ever done to him what the first big one did. I suppose it was just the loss of immortality, he thought." . . .

Two years before he died, I met Ernest Hemingway in Pamplona, Spain. For one hour he talked about his many wounds. The most revealing thing about that monologue at the Txoko Bar was that he never mentioned "the big one." That happened to be on July 8, 1959, exactly forty-one years after he nearly died "up on the Grappa," as he called it. . . .

"I did not care what it was all about. All I wanted to know was how to live in it," says Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises*. In not caring, Hemingway found in the post-war years a way to bear his wound: stoicism and "the giant killer," as he called booze. In those years Hemingway would work out his obsessive concern with "the way you die," the way he almost died. Dying for him was obscene. Catherine Barkley, in *A Farewell to Arms*, says to Frederick Henry as she lies dying, "Don't touch me," reminiscent of the uncleanness of death as depicted in the Bible, as is still felt by Jews who after visiting cemeteries wash their hands. Can we deny D.H. Lawrence's words about dying being a major American theme?

Finally, as critics have pointed out, the concept of the wound changed in Hemingway. From the moment Harry Morgan in *To Have and Have Not* (we are now in the 30's and the Depression) says, "a man alone ain't got no bloody chance," through Hemingway's next novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, we see the healing of the wound. Not that it is ever forgotten. The "*nada y pues nada*" and Frederick Henry's "separate peace" now become "No man is an island," the Hemingway hero himself, as Young claimed, rejoining society through commitment to it, thus finding justification for his wound as well as his father's suicide. Mr. Lynn's theory might find common ground here with the critics he attacks.

In *The Liberal Imagination*, Lionel Trilling said that in Hemingway's stories "a strongly charged piety toward the ideals and attachments of boyhood and the lusts of maturity is in conflict not only with the imagination of death but also with that imagination as it is peculiarly modified by the dark negation of the modern world." Here is another non-Marxist critic who sees the connection between family conflict and the wound as a symbol of disenchantment with the dark world.

Hemingway ascribed to "the way you die" the most significant test of man's endurance. But how does one go beyond the grave? Find the equivalent of death? This he did through his wound. Frederick Henry's soul and body fly in and out and back to him when he is wounded. Young Nick asks his father: "Is dying hard, Daddy?" to

which Doctor Adams responds, "It all depends." The wound theme as well as the parent-son relationship fit into the pattern of this short dialogue from "Indian Camp." On what it all depended was what Hemingway tried to find out.

DANIEL SPICEHANDLER
Department of Humanities
SUNY-Maritime College
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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Kenneth S. Lynn should not don the shield of omniscience unless he is omniscient. He mercilessly flays others who may have committed errors in fact or lapses in judgment (Edmund Wilson and Malcolm Cowley *inter alios*), but he himself is guilty of those deviations.

To begin with, Mr. Lynn could not apparently decide what the focal point of his essay would be; consequently, he gets lost in many a labyrinthine detour with the main road (whatever that might have been) never clearly in sight. Sometimes it seems that Mr. Lynn's central goal is to show how Hemingway's letters complement the picture of Hemingway's psyche as revealed in his fiction; at other times it appears that Mr. Lynn's thesis is to excoriate those post-World War II critics who inaccurately used Hemingway's post-World War I fiction to bolster their attack on American society; occasionally, Mr. Lynn isolates those tangled strands of Hemingway's psyche which seem to focus on his mother. The reader is never sure which is the main ring in this three-ring circus.

Furthermore, Mr. Lynn, who seems to rejoice in finding factual flaws in the work of other critics (Malcolm Cowley is found guilty of not giving "the correct year of Hemingway's birth"), is not beyond some boo-boos himself. For example, he writes: "In *Huckleberry Finn*, for instance, Huck's decision at the end of the book to cross over into the Oklahoma Territory for a few weeks of howling adventures with Tom Sawyer and Nigger Jim before returning to his home town in Missouri was transformed by post-World War II critics into a decision to secede forever from American society, because American society sickened the boy."

Now this is an extraordinary statement. If Mr. Lynn goes back to the last chapter, he will discover that (1) the several weeks of

"howling adventures" (a phrase Tom Sawyer uses) are proposed as a possibility but never actually carried out after Huck finds out from Jim that Huck's father is dead; (2) the book ends with Huck's decision *not* to return to his home town in Missouri because Aunt Sally is "going to adopt me and civilize [*sic*] me and I can't stand it. I been there before."

Finally, if Mr. Lynn has not already done so, he should read the introductory essays to Twain's novel by Lionel Trilling (1948) and by T.S. Eliot (1950); he will discover that here are two critics at least who did not "transform" Huck's decision to join Jim and Tom in the nonexistent "howling adventures" for the critics' own nefarious, propagandistic purposes.

Attacking liberal critics—or any kind of critics—when they are wrong is fair game; however, misrepresentation—even when unintentional—is not the way to achieve a convincing victory.

MILTON BIRNBAUM
Dean, School of Arts and Sciences
American International College
Springfield, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Kenneth S. Lynn's use of Carlos Baker's recent collection of the Ernest Hemingway letters to trace the inspirational source of some of Hemingway's stories and novels yields some interesting insights into those works and into Hemingway's real life. Mr. Lynn's discipline as a historian is also effective in exposing the presumptuous, wide-of-the-mark analyses of such prestigious literary critics as Edmund Wilson, Malcolm Cowley, Allen Tate, and others.

Decoding the crypto-significance of Hemingway's short stories and novels . . . is an entertaining exercise in literary detection. But of what utility? It is axiomatic, indeed bromidic, that a work of fiction, like any other work of art, should be judged on its own terms and not because of its correspondence to or flight from reality. Just as the flesh-and-blood model used by a painter or sculptor is of only minor historical importance in judging the canvas or the marble, so are the autobiographical origins of characters and scenes in a work of fiction of small weight on the scales of its merit. Moreover, literary license certainly is broad enough to permit a single fictional character to be created from a composite of many

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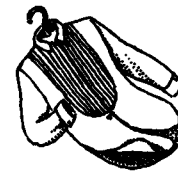
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real life people. Or, . . . he may be a tri-part clone of Hemingway himself. . . .

In his foreword to *Look Homeward, Angel*, Thomas Wolfe made the point: "If the writer has used clay of life to make his book, he has only used what all men must, what none can keep from using."

SIDNEY Z. KARASIK
Highland Park, Illinois

KENNETH S. LYNN writes:

I am distressed to learn that Aaron Haspel does not know that I used to be a professor of English at Harvard before I became a professor of history at Johns Hopkins, and that I have been publishing books and essays on a wide variety of American literary figures for more than a quarter of a century.

But I am even more cast down by the unrelieved oddity of Mr. Haspel's ensuing remarks. Nothing he says makes any sense. My essay most certainly does not conclude by saying that most of Hemingway's work stemmed from a violent hatred of his mother. I also do not know what Mr. Haspel is talking about when he says that I cite two different opinions by Edmund Wilson about the meaning of "Big Two-Hearted River." As my essay makes clear, Wilson had only one opinion, which was informed by his political nausea. Why Mr. Haspel is upset by those words, political nausea, is another mystery. I am by no means the first person who has applied them to Wilson, and no one who has read *The Wound and the Bow*, in which his Hemingway essay appears, or who has pondered his famous "sea-slug" introduction to *Patriotic Gore*, or who is familiar with his troubles with the IRS, will doubt the accuracy of the description.

Mr. Haspel's comments on what I have to say about Malcolm Cowley are equally wild. I did not say, nor did I imply, that Cowley's listing of the corpses in Hemingway's stories contained illustrations from "Big Two-Hearted River." I said, rather, that the overall credibility of Cowley's death-in-life interpretation of Hemingway rested on his repeated references to that celebrated story, and that he had badly misrepresented its meaning. Mr.

Haspel also seems unaware that the word "hypnagogic" was Cowley's before it became mine, so if he thinks that Hemingway's visions "are anything but that," then he should complain to Cowley.

Mr. Haspel is wrong again when he says that I deny that Nick Adams is some sort of psychological cripple; what I actually say is that Hemingway, unlike Wilson, Cowley, Young, and other critics, never identifies the exact nature of Nick's undeniable malaise. Finally, I am flabbergasted by Mr. Haspel's belief that I take issue with the literary criticism of Allen Tate. Every careful reader of my essay knows that Tate's views are quoted there for the purpose of buttressing my own.

Daniel Spichandler implies that a fun-loving Edmund Wilson and Malcolm Cowley received their first spiritual wounds in World War I. I disagree. Wilson, like Hemingway, has left us with ample autobiographical evidence that he was a troubled child before he became a troubled man. About Cowley's childhood I cannot speak with the same confidence, for in *Exile's Return*, the first of his personal histories, he is disappointingly uncan-did about his formative years. In time, though, a diligent biographer may very well be able to demonstrate that Cowley's profound alienation from American life did not originate on the battlefields of Europe.

Although "Chapter the Last" in *Huckleberry Finn* is only two pages long, Milton Birnbaum has managed to misread it. The chapter begins with a description, in Huck's words, of the next adventure that Tom Sawyer has in mind for them, now that Nigger Jim is a free man. "What he had planned in his head . . . was for us to run [Jim] down the river, on the raft, and have adventures plumb to the mouth of the river, and then . . . take him back up home on a steamboat, in style, and pay him for his lost time, and write word ahead and get out all the niggers around, and have them waltz him into town with a torchlight procession and a brass band, and then he would be a hero, and so would we." Tom subsequently amends this idea and pro-

poses that he and Huck and Jim "go for howling adventures amongst the Injuns, over in the Territory, for a couple of weeks or two."

Huck thinks Tom's ideas are grand, but he decides to light out for the Oklahoma Territory a little ahead of his companions, because he is aware that Aunt Sally Phelps, on whose "one-horse" plantation near Pikesville, Arkansas he has been living for some time, is about to "adopt me and sivilize me and I can't stand it. I been there before." In other words, Huck doesn't want to live in respectability on a plantation in Arkansas, he wants to go back to St. Petersburg, Missouri and live in a hogshead, as he had been doing when we first met him in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. We later learn from Huck, in the sequel to *Huckleberry Finn* called *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, that Tom's gaudy dream of further adventures followed by a triumphant return to St. Petersburg came true: "You see," says Huck, "when we three came back up the river in glory, as you may say, from that long travel, and the village received us with a torchlight procession and speeches, and everybody hurrah'd and shouted, it made us heroes, and that was what Tom Sawyer had always been hankering to be."

What Huck Finn's travel plans were as he prepared to leave Arkansas seem pretty clear. Yet in the 1950's, a rising generation of disaffected literary critics turned a projected vacation trip into a drastic, final gesture of alienation and rejection. Huck Finn was lighting out for the Territory, and he was never going to come back. In the 1980's, Mr. Birnbaum still swears by that misreading, for reasons which I think I know.

Sidney Z. Karasik begins his letter with a couple of compliments, for which I am grateful. But then he asks of what utility it is to locate the inspirational source of some of Hemingway's best-known works in the tensions of his private life. No more and no less utility, I would say, than to discuss Shakespeare's plays in the light of his intellectual debt to Montaigne, or to connect Stendhal's novels to the events of post-Napoleonic politics.

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Speaking to the Third World

Peter L. Berger

"THIRD WORLD." The very phrase by now evokes a multitude of images, positive as well as negative. Empirically, of course, the words bear little resemblance to reality—except, perhaps, at the United Nations, where the so-called Group of 77 does possess a real political form. But what, after all, do Brazil and Bangladesh have in common, or Singapore and the Seychelles, not to mention the oil-rich nations of the Gulf and the starvation-ridden countries of the Sahel? The so-called Third World includes countries of astronomically diverse economic, social, political, and cultural characteristics.

There are alternative terms. Within the United Nations, parlance has shifted from "underdeveloped countries" to "developing" to "less developed," each creating difficulties of its own. There is also the currently fashionable term "South," as in the "North/South dialogue" or "North/South global negotiations" urgently propagated by the Brandt Report and other voices for reform of the international system. This terminology, if nothing else, suffers from geographical absurdity. India is "South" and Australia "North," while the industrial societies of the Soviet bloc are in a never-never land left out of the "dialogue" altogether.

Political language is rarely an exercise in scientific logic, however, and chances are that we are stuck with the terms we have. The Third World, whatever else it may or may not be, is a rhetorical reality, and when Americans speak to the poorer nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (and even to some of the less poor nations in those regions), they are indeed addressing the Third World.

The phrase itself originated in the early 1950's, and was solemnly proclaimed as a reality at the Bandung conference of 1955, when a number of "non-aligned" countries (including Sukarno's Indonesia, Nehru's India, and Tito's Yugoslavia) asserted their right to pursue a path independent of the two superpower blocs. But already more was implied with respect to the American and Soviet systems than simple non-alignment. There was

also the notion of a "third way" of development, different from the allegedly flawed models of American-style capitalism and Soviet-style Communism. Just what that third way might be was never spelled out with much precision. Presumably it was more socialist than the American model and more democratic than the Soviet one—some sort of social democracy, yet not simply a copy of Western models, rather an indigenous construction doing justice to the cultural traditions of the countries first gathered at Bandung.

These implications have remained in place. Although the quarter-century that has elapsed since Bandung has not produced a sharper definition of the development "model" to which all of the countries concerned (by now well over one hundred) might jointly adhere, this vagueness has not prevented the emergence of something that could accurately be called a Third World ideology. Nor has it prevented powerful emotional associations with the phrase "Third World," not only in the countries deemed to belong to that world but in Western countries as well.

In the Western mind, the phrase evokes eschatological themes dating all the way back to Joachim of Flora's Third Age and to the dream of a Third Rome (leaving aside the obscene parody of these themes in the myth of the Third Reich propagated by the Nazis, who also took that phrase from much earlier sources). For leftists there is the additional association with the threefold Hegelian dialectic, the third moment of which, the "synthesis," is to solve redemptively the contradictions of the preceding thesis and antithesis (in this case, presumably, the contradictions between capitalism and Communism).

In recent decades, and particularly since the 1960's, the Third World has served as a gigantic Rorschach card onto which Westerners have projected their fantasies, their fears, and their hopes of salvation. Academic experts in "nation-building," Peace Corps volunteers, and would-be revolutionaries have flocked to this or that Third World country in search of a suitable laboratory for their particular projects of designed social change. In the 60's and 70's, the New Left, eager to find a Marxist experiment free of the acknowledged flaws of the Soviet model, enthroned one Third

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World country after another as the locale of humane socialism: Cuba, China, North Vietnam, more esoterically Tanzania or Mozambique, for a brief moment of glory Allende's Chile, more recently Nicaragua. The counterculture evinced a generalized interest in the Third World as the place where simpler, healthier, and spiritually more profound ways of life were to be found—for years young people in peasant clothes, looking for the peasants with whom to affiliate, commuted haplessly between Kabul and Katmandu or meditated on the beaches of Goa, prey to every guru on the make. The same Third World of the imagination continues to haunt a miscellany of counter-modern movements in Western countries—such radical offshoots of environmentalism as anti-nuclear activists, zero-growth enthusiasts, advocates of solar energy and holistic healing, propagandists of “alternate technology” and Tantric meditation.

Needless to say, these people have contributed little if anything to the countries to which they have come as political pilgrims (to use Paul Hollander's apt term), while at home their main contribution has been to legitimate various tyrannies. Still, only a relatively small group of people in America and other Western countries have utilized the Third World in this manner. (In Western Europe the phenomenon still appears to be on the rise, while in America it has been declining.)

Not surprisingly, there has also been a counter-image of the Third World—an image of hopelessly corrupt, incompetent, and oppressive regimes, opposed to American purposes and ideals. In this conception of the Third World, instead of noble revolutionaries and wholesome peasants, we get predatory dictators; the only way to deal with such regimes is to ignore them or tell them off.

As an overall stance toward the Third World, an attitude of contempt and hostility is no better than an attitude of awed and guilt-ridden admiration. If nothing else, the aforementioned diversity of the Third World should preclude such one-sided responses. The Third World is not an arena for our utopianisms; neither is it a zone in which to locate our sundry demonologies.

JUST because so much nonsense has been spouted about the Third World, it is useful to step back and try to gain some perspective on a phenomenon which is, at bottom, nothing less than the entry onto the stage of history of vast masses of people who until now have lived in a situation that can be accurately described as pre-historical.

Immense anguish and pain, physical as well as moral, have been associated with the entry of these people into the common history of our age. There is a timeless dignity to the forms of human existence provided by tribe, village, and other traditional structures, and the disturbance of these life-forms by the turbulent forces of modernity has

hardly been an unambiguous boon. Yet many if not most of the images of anguish turn out, upon closer scrutiny, to be superimposed upon images of hope.

Take one of the most common negative images of Third World development—the overcrowded slums of the enormous urban agglomerations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, symbolized by the names of Calcutta, Lagos, Mexico City, and all those other cities that impress one as gigantic explosions, human volcanoes in cataclysmic eruption. It is easy to contrast the turbulence and undeniable misery of these places with the supposed tranquility and relative contentment of the villages from which most of their inhabitants have only just arrived. But there is another side to the picture. The overwhelming majority of the people in these urban agglomerations have come to the cities voluntarily. What is more, they have come knowing full well what to expect: Third World peasants are no less rational than Western intellectuals in making important decisions for themselves and their children, and the networks of clan and caste insure that highly reliable information is fed back to home villages. Why do they keep coming? The answer is very simple: because they have reason to believe that their chances of a better life are greater in the cities than at home.

Thus the vast migrations of the Third World are not mindless movements of dehumanized and desperate masses (as depicted, for example, in the apocalyptic novel *The Camp of the Saints* by the French writer Jean Raspail). Rather, they represent the quest of countless individuals and families for a life of greater dignity and decency. To be sure, that quest is often frustrated. Many times over, however, it is realized. And precisely in places like Calcutta one is impressed by the vitality, courage, and resourcefulness of people who, all at once, are given hope of a better life.

If one asks *why* so much of the Third World is so crowded, the reason is not high birth rates; it is the dramatic lowering of death rates, and particularly of the rates of infant mortality. This change begins to take place even at very rudimentary levels of economic development, with the introduction of quite modest improvements in nutrition and hygiene. The human consequence of this change is extraordinarily simple: whereas, previously, most children died, now more and more children survive. In this there is joy and hope, and it is precisely these emotions that fuel the energy with which much of the Third World seems to overflow. No amount of skepticism about the blessings of modernity can nullify the human and moral progress which this change signifies.

It cannot surprise us that politics in these cataclysmic circumstances should be volatile, often violent, often irrational. But the politics of the putatively more developed West have not exactly been a model of order and rationality in this century. (An observer from Zaire, once a colony of Bel-

gium, noted mordantly that the irrational conflicts between the French and the Flemish in that country, which have brought about the irremediable destruction of the ancient university of Louvain, one of the historic centers of Western learning, clearly demonstrate that Belgium is not yet ripe for self-government.) It is all too easy to denigrate the nascent nationalisms of the Third World, to ridicule such practices as the investment of scarce capital in the "empty symbolism" of, for example, a national airline. But this self-affirmation of people who only yesterday, so far as the rest of the world was concerned, were silent, must also be part of our understanding of the Third World. It is something to be affirmed, even celebrated.

If the ideology of the Third World consisted only in proclaiming these realities, we should have no serious difficulty with it. Even if that ideology insisted that it was our obligation, humanly and morally, to help, we should assent. The eradication of starvation and of degrading misery is a moral imperative for states and for the international community, as well as for concerned citizens and non-governmental groups in rich countries. Unfortunately, Third World ideology has gone considerably beyond such propositions, and it is not possible, either intellectually or morally, to assent to it as a whole.

Not that the Third World is an ideological monolith. Just as it is diverse in its economic, social, and political realities, so is it diverse ideologically. It contains explicitly Marxist states and explicitly anti-Marxist ones, states (notably in the Muslim world) that profess to be governed by religious tradition and emphatically secular states. If one speaks of a Third World ideology, then, one is referring to an "ideal type." This does not mean that the type has no relation to reality. It does. The reality surfaces most visibly within the United Nations system on those occasions when Third World countries agree on a common position (which happens quite frequently).

To be sure, even within the United Nations different states proclaim this ideology with different nuances and varying forcefulness. Singapore does not speak like India, Senegal says different things from Ethiopia, Brazil from Mexico. But one interesting and unifying aspect should be noted: the construction that one may call the Third World ideology is, broadly speaking, leftist—indeed, in important intellectual respects it depends on elements of Marxist theory—and it is given lip service by states that are anything but leftist in their domestic arrangements. If one asks why that should be, the answer, one must surmise, is that these states expect to gain, politically or economically, from a rhetorical adherence to positions which happen to contradict their own internal strategies. This is distressing—but also hopeful, for it shows the fragile basis of the Third World consensus and provides openings for dissenting points of view.

WITH these qualifications, it is possible to point to a series of propositions as the common core of the Third World ideology:

- Development is not just a matter of economic growth. Rather, one can only regard as development those processes of change in which the dynamism of economic growth is harnessed to transcendent social purposes—to the progressive rescue from degrading poverty of masses of people and to a more egalitarian distribution of the benefits of growth.

- The causes of Third World poverty must be sought primarily outside the Third World itself—historically in the depredations of colonialism and imperialism, today in the consequences of an unjust international economic system which is heavily weighted in favor of the rich countries of the West (or "North") against the poor countries of the Third World (or "South").

- The West owes "compensation" or "reparations" to the Third World for past acts of exploitation. Also, the West owes the Third World a redress of the unjust international economic system through a variety of juridical, political, and economic measures. This, in the long run, will be of benefit to all countries, as it will result in a more stable world order.

- The establishment of a just international system is a prerequisite for all aspects of development, not only economic but political and human as well. For that reason economic and social rights must be accorded parity with civil and political rights within the general conception of human rights espoused by the international community.

These propositions constitute an intellectual and moral whole. That is, they are based on a set of presuppositions about the nature of the world and they also put this view of the world into a moral context, a view of what the world *ought* to be. Moreover, this ideology, culled from a variety of sources (most of them, incidentally, of Western provenance), is not an abstract intellectual enterprise. Rather it is a political instrument, used to legitimate specific objectives. Thus the broad acceptance of this ideology by Third World governments has gone hand in hand with various political initiatives, almost all of them within the United Nations system.

These initiatives have not only been aimed at securing favorable treatment for Third World countries in terms of trade and aid, but have also sought to enshrine some of the features of Third World ideology in international law. In 1974, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. This was meant to forge into a juridical instrument the calls for a New International Economic Order, which, first issued by Mexico in the early 1970's, had increasingly become a rallying point for the Group of 77.

This thrust to establish a legal foundation for

Third World demands continues today in efforts to change the structure of international monetary institutions, to set in motion a multilateral process of "global negotiations," and to recognize the "right to development" as a fundamental human right (individual as well as collective). A French commentator on this process, Alain Pellet, has aptly described it as one in which "recommendations" are progressively transformed into "obligations." The United States and other Western states have continually resisted these efforts to make the United Nations into a quasi-legislative body on behalf of Third World concerns, but the Group of 77 has been able to override most of the resistance within the United Nations system. (The real world outside the United Nations enclaves of New York, Geneva, and Vienna has been less tractable.)

This is not the place to discuss the farreaching juridical problems relevant to the Third World initiatives. Nor is it the place to go into the economic and political questions that are currently on the agenda of "global negotiations"—terms of trade, aid levels, control over natural resources, regulation of transnational corporations, and the like. What I should like to do here is to formulate a possible American response to the main themes of Third World ideology.

IT is clear that, with one or two exceptions, such a response must be mainly negative—as, indeed, it has been when American spokesmen have confronted elements of the ideology in the United Nations. Maintaining such a negative stance is not comfortable—not for the individuals who must appear in international forums where the emotional temperature is often very high, and not for a people that historically has an idealistic image of itself and a strong psychological need to be liked.

Thus one question that must be considered immediately is whether Americans are wise to put themselves into such a negative position. It is a question often raised by Europeans. After all, they say, what is at issue here is mainly words; the United Nations itself is largely a word-factory, and the words mean very little; for public-relations reasons, since nothing substantive is being given away, why not give "them" the words they want?

The suggestion is attractive (perhaps especially so to anyone who has been forced to listen to the endless rhetoric of international meetings at which Third World spokesmen angrily present their views). Yet it must be firmly rejected, and for two reasons, one political and one moral. Politically, it is an error (if you will, a vulgar Marxist error) to believe that words mean nothing. Words embody ideas, and ideas have real consequences, in the long run if not immediately. Morally, the attitude of giving "them" words rather than substance is patronizing, even an expression of contempt (in the case of some Europeans, one suspects a conti-

nunity here with attitudes of the not-so-distant colonial past). Whatever we may think about their views on some matters, Americans must confront their Third World interlocutors as equals. It is to equals that one is free to say "no." And it is "no" that we must often say.

Often, but not always. To the proposition that development is not the same as economic growth, we can indeed assent. Demurring from the overemphasis on equality, we can also assent to a definition of development that includes greater access to a decent life and institutions for the protection of the human rights of everyone in society.

But we must dissent from the fundamental idea of economic relations that underlies the Third World ideology. This is a vast elaboration of Proudhon's dictum that property is theft. Economic relations are seen here as a zero-sum game. The gain of one is necessarily the loss of another. Wealth is acquired at the expense of the poor. Resources are owned by one and taken away by the other. To be sure, there are such cases, and they can be appropriately characterized as exploitation, but they are the exception rather than the rule. More to the point, this exploitation "model" does not fit the relations between the Third World and the advanced societies of the West either in the past or today.

THE thesis that colonialism and imperialism impoverished and hampered the development of Third World societies is highly questionable, to say the least. As P.T. Bauer has pointed out repeatedly, the poorest countries tend to be those whose economic relations with the West have been minimal, while many ex-colonies have done very well indeed. There is no way in which the affluence of a long list of Western countries, including the United States, can be causally explained by colonial exploitation. As for the great colonial powers themselves, such as Britain and France, historians will argue for a long time whether they in fact profited more from their colonies than they put into them.

It is also very questionable whether the contemporary international system can be described as exploitative in the sense that "Northern" wealth is extracted from "Southern" poverty. With the exception of some natural resources, among which oil is paramount, the economies of the "North" are quite independent of the "South." Indeed, that is precisely the problem for Third World economies, which, in order to develop, must seek to enter the "rich" system under favorable conditions. This is a very real problem and a difficult one, and one with a moral dimension. Recognition of that dimension, however, stems from our common humanity and from the solidarity between nations. It is not something that can be optimistically proclaimed in various international instruments; it cannot stem from distorted history, bad law, or pathological guilt feelings.

The demand for "compensation" or "reparations" is thus spurious—historically, juridically, and morally. It is also absurd: one need only ask whether it recognizes any statute of limitations or how the putative debtors are to be defined. Can Hungary demand compensation from Mongolia for the depredations of Genghis Khan? Are black Americans to sue the states of West Africa for the collusion of past political authorities with the slave trade?

There is an even more serious distortion of economic reality in Third World ideology. That is the emphasis on external rather than internal "obstacles to development." These external obstacles are recurrently invoked in what has by now become a litany of exorcism—"imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, racism, *apartheid*," to which catalogue, for good measure, "Zionism" is occasionally added. The litany is mostly malicious nonsense.

Let it be stipulated that there are, in fact, situations where external forces serve to impede the development of a country. In these situations the character and strength of such forces must be assessed, and the country in question is fully entitled to seek relief by whatever means. I would contend, though, that such situations are quite rare—except in the massive case of Soviet imperialism, which, for reasons that are patently political, is hardly ever mentioned in this context.

The most frequent "obstacles to development" are internal to the societies in quest of development. Among such obstacles are economic systems that stultify growth and impede productivity; political corruption; oppression of people to the point where they cease to be economically active; persecution of economically productive minorities (such as the Asians in eastern Africa and the Chinese in southeast Asia); and, in some cases, indigenous social patterns and cultural values that are not conducive to economic activity. The fixation on external villains is a convenient stratagem for Third World elites who are either unable or unwilling to face up to internal obstacles. There is no reason, however, why we should fortify them in this evasion.

One may note here as well the tendency of Third World spokesmen and their sympathizers in the West to stress the allegedly growing gap between rich and poor nations and the deteriorating condition of the Third World as a whole. Both propositions are dubious. It is not at all clear that the gap is broadening, especially in recent years when Western economies have faced serious difficulties, many of them caused by the astronomical rise in energy costs (OPEC is virtually never mentioned in Third World pronouncements as a cause of poverty in these countries—roughly for the same reasons Soviet imperialism is not mentioned). And while the condition of some countries has deteriorated, there have also been phenomenal success stories in the Third World, such

as those of South Korea, Taiwan, and some of the ASEAN states.

What with all the emphasis on juridical instruments and agreements between states, one gets the impression that many Third World representatives look upon development as something to be wrested from others—namely, the industrialized countries of the West, or rather their governments. It is to be development by fiat, following upon a political struggle in which concessions are won by moral suasion or by pressures of various sorts.

This strange view is perhaps encouraged by the unreality of the United Nations, in which words appear to take on a life of their own, and by the simple fact that the "North-South dialogue" is mainly conducted by government officials who tend to hold an exaggerated idea of the importance of political institutions.

All of this, however, obfuscates the fact that development, in any meaning of the term, cannot be the result of juridical and political arrangements between states (though such arrangements can be useful in particular instances). Development is the result of the sustained economic activity of large numbers of people, the result of effort, hard work, and ingenuity. It cannot be wrested from someone else, like a chunk of valuable matter. Indeed, such a view masks a paternalism of its own, for if development is something that can be wrested from us in the West, then it is we who grant it. This stands in curious contradiction to the oft-repeated Third World principles of self-reliance and freedom from dependency. Whatever development may mean, it should not mean the establishment of an international welfare system.

THE bias in Third World statements about development derives from the fact that many Third World regimes follow some variety of socialism both in theory and practice, while many others, if not socialist, are heavily statist in their economic system. Although a detailed discussion of socialist models of development would take many pages, suffice it to say that among the socialist regimes of the Third World there is not a single success story—defining success not in "our" terms but, precisely, in the Third World terms of victory over the more wretched forms of poverty and a reasonable degree of egalitarian distribution. The typical record of Third World socialism is one of economic stagnation, often perpetuating abject poverty if not outright starvation; the species of egalitarianism that prevails among the "masses" is one of an equality among serfs, lorded over by a privileged elite of party bureaucrats and managers. Shmuel Eisenstadt has called this system "neo-patrimonialism"; Pierre Bourdieu's term, "socialo-feudalism," is also apt. The vast panorama of "different paths to development" in the contemporary world only reinforces the conclusion that socialism is incapable of producing in terms of its own promises.

In non-socialist cases, too, it is quite clear that the state as such is not the bearer of development. At best, states can institute policies that *leave room* for the real agents of development—enterprising individuals, families, clans, *compadre* groupings, and other traditional units, and more modern associations such as cooperatives or credit unions.

The moral aspect of this ought to be stressed. A heavy moral responsibility rests on those who impose unproductive and inefficient economic arrangements on developing societies, doubly so when these arrangements are adhered to in the face of hunger, disease, and degrading poverty. It is obscenely inappropriate when the very people who propagate this criminal waste of human and material resources claim to be or to represent the “party of compassion.”

Official United Nations declarations and position papers are reassuringly clear on one point: economic, social, and cultural rights are to be thought of as an indivisible whole with civil and political rights, and neither set of rights is to be given priority over the other. This would seem to be official Secretariat doctrine and, on the face of it, would preclude the notion that civil and political rights can be set aside until certain economic and social goals have been achieved (in the manner of both Marxist and other “development dictatorships”). Unfortunately, Third World spokesmen are not always so clear. There is often the suggestion that civil and political rights are devoid of real meaning unless or until economic and social rights have been secured. Worse, the securing of the latter set of rights is now often identified with the establishment of the New International Economic Order, an eschatological event comparable to the final passage to Communism in Marxist thought. This facet of Third World ideology, which offers a pretext for legitimizing sundry violations of human rights in the unredeemed present, is but another version of a gambit favored by many tyrants of our age.

There is one last element of Third World ideology to which we may give at least qualified assent—that is the proposition that Third World development is in the long-term interest of the industrial societies of the West. This proposition is often advanced on economic grounds (as in the Brandt Report), reflecting a Keynesian view of economics that many in the West will not find persuasive today; if Keynesian economics has not worked very well within societies, one may be skeptical about its working between societies. On political grounds, however, there is much to be said for the proposition. A permanently impoverished, politically turbulent Third World cannot be in the interest of the industrial democracies of the West, and steps to forestall such a situation can be seen as expressions of self-interest.

It is appropriate to appeal to people to do things out of self-interest; it is difficult to do so

while at the same time denouncing them. In their stance toward the West, Third World spokesmen will have to choose between statesmanship and evangelism; both cannot be plausibly exercised simultaneously. Of the two, statesmanship would appear to be the more promising course.

GIVEN the adversary posture of Third World ideology vis-à-vis the United States, it is inevitable that Americans will have to adopt a critical stance. At the same time, Americans must have the confidence to present a positive model of development that is properly their own—to present, that is, an American ideology of development. Americans had such confidence before the recent period of national self-criticism, and some of it, let it be conceded, was overconfidence. The idea that the American experience could be directly transplanted to the Third World and emulated there in all its details was dubious even in the 1950's. It is both intellectually dubious and politically ineffective now. What we must rather do (and this is by no means an easy task) is to isolate certain key elements of the American experience which are not necessarily dependent on the peculiar historical and cultural features of our society, and define the manner and degree to which they can be transplanted to different societies.

Two such elements stand out: democracy and capitalism. At the heart of any American ideology of development must lie the concept of democratic capitalism, to use the felicitous phrase which Michael Novak has introduced. Specifically, what needs to be shown is that the human benefits associated with the democratic ideal are linked empirically (and perhaps linked necessarily) with societal arrangements that, minimally, leave important sectors of the economy to the free operation of market forces.

We do not, at this point, possess a comprehensive theory of capitalism, but one thing we know is the empirical correlation between capitalism and political liberty (as well as the correlation between political liberty and the whole gamut of human rights). That correlation can be stated with great precision: every democracy in the contemporary world has a capitalist economy; no society with a socialist economy is democratic. The fact that a sizable number of countries, all now in the Third World, are capitalist *and* non-democratic does not negate the correlation between democracy and capitalism, which can be theoretically explicated in terms of the brakes on state power that a private sector *tends* to produce.

Another thing about which we know a good deal is the relationship between economic systems and success in the achievement of development goals. As I noted above, there is not a single socialist success story; all the success stories have occurred in countries with capitalist systems. We do not as yet know enough about the reasons for the failure of some capitalist systems. Obviously all

societal decisions entail risks; there are no guarantees. But if the goal is *both* development *and* institutions protecting liberty and human rights, capitalist economic arrangements are the better bet.

This does not mean that Americans should engage in a great crusade to make the world safe for democratic capitalism. We do not have the power to do this and, even if we had, we should respect those who choose other directions (assuming, which is rare, that they choose freely). But this need not prevent us from speaking openly and without embarrassment about the realities that we perceive, even if doing so puts us in a minority position in most international forums and among intellectuals in most countries. The socialist vision has been *the* grand fantasy of our age; amid all the celebrations of illusion and wishful thinking, it may be the mission of America to represent the "reality principle."

The practical implication is that American advice and assistance on development (by government as well as by non-governmental bodies) should emphasize the private sector and private entrepreneurship wherever possible. Such an emphasis by no means implies focusing on the large transnational corporations (though the demonological view of these institutions should be repudiated). Rather, the focus should be on indigenous enterprise, much of it small and precarious. Most important of all, the focus should be on the privately owned and operated family farm, which virtually everywhere has been the agent of successful agrarian development.

There are a good many Third World societies in which such an emphasis on the private sector is not practicable. But even in socialist or heavily statist societies, it is an illusion that economic activity can be totally controlled from the political command posts. Development is invariably the fruit of individual and small-group effort, and Americans should reiterate this elementary fact over and over again in the face of the self-aggrandizing delusions of bureaucrats and intellectuals.

IT MUST also be a part of the American position on development that democracy, with its panoply of protections for individual rights, is not a luxury of the rich. On the contrary, it is the poor who need democracy much more urgently than the rich. In most places, certainly in most places in the Third World, the rich manage to protect their interests. It is the poor who need the institutional protections of liberty the most—protection against the arbitrary powers of local police, against employers who would deny them the right to organize, against those who would prevent a journalist from writing about conditions of poverty, and so on.

The proposition that democracy is a luxury of rich countries is also false. Democracy and development may not be invariably linked phenomena, but most countries in which democracy has been

suppressed in the name of development have not attained their development goals, either. On the other hand, in authoritarian regimes, as development gains the pressures for democracy increase.

In the development literature as well as in the rhetoric of Third World spokesmen there is much talk about "participation"—the notion that people should be the subjects rather than the objects of development strategies. But participation outside the framework of a democratic polity is invariably questionable. "Mobilization" is not participation; it is usually the opposite, the regimentation of people in the service of projects to which they did not agree and over which they have no control. And even in democratic or near-democratic situations the meaning of the term is not always clear. Participation means little unless the values and indigenous institutions of the people engaged in development efforts are respected by the authorities. It is very important to stress that, in most Third World countries, these are *traditional* values and *traditional* institutions. Americans should always insist on the literal meaning of the term "participation" and debunk relentlessly situations in which the term is used to camouflage the imposition of social-engineering designs on people who were never asked. In other words, participation means that people have real choices and real influence, or it means nothing at all.

One of the most intractable problems of modern life concerns the fate of those institutions ("mediating structures" in sociological parlance) which stand between the individual and the macro-structures of the state. These are the institutions that provide meaning and identity to individuals. Paramount among them in all societies are the family and the religious community. In Third World societies other groupings of a traditional character have to be added—clan, tribe, caste, village, ethnic and regional subcultures. Superimposed on these, and existing often in a symbiotic relation to them, are a variety of local economic, social, and political associations of modern provenance.

A good case can be made that development strategies which ignore or run roughshod over such mediating structures are unlikely to succeed. This case should be made strongly by Americans, as against the totalitarian tendencies in much thinking about the Third World. But the case should be related to the argument for democratic capitalism. Capitalism "leaves room" for mediating structures, while socialist development models almost always try to suppress, regiment, or (perhaps worst of all) "mobilize" them. Indeed, this tendency is causally related to the failures of socialist development; the record is particularly clear in the area of agriculture. What we now know about the fiasco of Maoist policies in China may serve as the *exemplum horribile* of such strategies.

Already in the 1950's the idea was prevalent that traditional values and institutions were "ob-

stacles to development." But development strategies which defy tradition at all points run into great peril. Iran offers an important example. A counter-example is Japan, where, apparently to date, the society has successfully modernized while leaving traditional values and institutions intact over large areas of life. Similarly successful "creative schizophrenia" seems to be a factor in the development of Asian societies with a strong foundation in Confucian or neo-Confucian morality. Recent events in India are also instructive in this regard. Hinduism, more than any other traditional culture, has been characterized by development analysts as an "obstacle"; in the 1960's and 1970's India was always compared unfavorably with China. We now know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the dismal reality of China's Maoist experiment. In India, in the meantime, there has taken place what may yet come to be seen as an agricultural miracle. The causes of this, as far as one can tell, have been a combination of technological innovation (the "Green Revolution") and imaginative government policies on credit and technical assistance to small farmers. It did *not* involve an attack on traditional Hindu values and social patterns. On the contrary, development has taken place within the traditional forms of Hindu village life.

Once again, Americans should speak for a view of modernity which does not regard traditional ways of life as something to be despised and discarded. And once again, the case should be made that for such purposes democratic capitalism provides the model.

THE individuals who purport to speak in the name of the Third World are, typically, unelected and unrepresentative of anything but the tiny group that happens to hold state power at a particular moment. Even when they do represent elected governments, they typically belong to a very small elite with Western education and an international outlook. Most of them have as little knowledge of or contact with "the masses" of their own people as a Harvard professor purporting to represent "the masses" of America (happily, few Harvard professors make such a claim). We should not disguise our awareness of this fact. In addressing the Third World, we may often have to try and speak to people over the heads of their governments. We cannot do this everywhere with equal facility, but in many places we have the capacity if we have the will.

It has often been said that the United States is a

conservative or counterrevolutionary power in the contemporary world. There is truth in this—if one looks at the world in purely political terms. American foreign policy has indeed been dominated by the desire to stabilize, while the other superpower has aimed to destabilize. But if one looks at the world in economic, social, and cultural terms, nothing could be farther from the truth. The Soviet Union represents economic stagnation, social conservatism, and cultural sterility. By contrast, the Western world, and the United States above all, brims over with economic, social, and cultural vitality. Whether one considers technological innovation, industrial and agricultural productivity, or the vast array of social and cultural experiments, it is America that is in the lead.

One can ascribe this vitality to a number of factors, but at the core of it is, precisely, the gigantic transforming power of democratic capitalism, that power which Joseph Schumpeter once called "creative destruction." Put simply: the only real revolution going on in the world today is that of democratic capitalism. Its adversaries represent counterrevolution and reaction.

The most important evidence for this elementary fact is the irresistible attraction of American culture—the culture *par excellence* of democratic capitalism—even in, indeed especially in, countries where anti-Americanism dominates political rhetoric. From the realm of ideas to the trivia of everyday living, from high culture to the least appetizing pop fashions, and across the entire range of material and non-material furnishings of what is considered a desirable "life-style" (itself a deeply revealing term, of American origin), it is the symbols and the substance of American civilization that are sweeping the world. There seems to be no letup in this process, and no viable competitors have appeared on the scene. What is more, this revolutionary culture has the unique ability to thrive under conditions that foster freedom and that allow expression to a plurality of values, including many of the values of tradition.

Just as it is preposterous that the international Left, with its miserable and misery-creating record, still arrogates to itself the status of the "party of compassion," so it is preposterous that it pretends to be the party of revolution. In creating an American mode of address to the Third World, we should remind ourselves that we represent the only revolution in the world today that can credibly promise economic development, political liberty, and respect for the dignity of human beings in their infinite variety.

On the Ninth of Ab

Frank Talmage

THE liturgy for the Ninth of Ab, the day of fasting which marks the destruction of the First and Second Temples as well as other tragedies in Jewish history, laments the fate of Jerusalem, "The mournful, wasted, degraded, and desolate city." Every year the Israeli rabbinate is asked if one must still say these words, if indeed it is not now blasphemous to say them at all. And every year the rabbinate furnishes its rabbinical answers. From my window in Jerusalem, where I often spend the summer, I view the frenetic activity of the Ramot Eshkol shopping center, the bands of tourists and children scurrying across Ammunition Hill, the luxurious homes on Givat Hamivtar, and it takes more inner vision than I can muster to see a wasted and desolate city.

It is not that the Ninth of Ab no longer has any meaning or that mourning is inappropriate; it is that these surroundings are not conducive to it. The situation evokes and is evoked by the words of a contemporary Catalan poet, Salvador Espriu, in his *The Bull-Hide* (*La pell de brau*, 1960):*

And so we know that we are still
scattered across the earth,
blown by the winds, by the pilgrimage
of the Golah.

And we no longer want to weep
for the Temple,
nor suffer infinite longing
for Jerusalem, our city.

(*The Bull-Hide* VII)

Espriu, of course, is expressing concerns of his own, but his words are not inappropriate to my thoughts.

It is the words of another, earlier Catalan poet, Bonaventura Carles Aribau, that help me out of my quandary. Aribau's "Ode to the Homeland" ("*Oda a la pàtria*," 1833) was to become the clarion call for the 19th-century Catalan literary revival, the *Renaixença*. Writing the poem from distant Madrid, he gave vent to his longing for his homeland and bade adieu to "*la tomba del jueu*"

(the tomb of the Jew). For the Catalan, the "tomb of the Jew" was a metonym for Montjuich, the *mons judaicus*, the great hill which housed the medieval Jewish burial ground of Barcelona and which dominates the city, serving as one of its principal landmarks. For the Jew, the reference to that particular tomb may be read as an allusion to Catalonia itself, indeed to all of Spain. There, Israel, the "ever-dying people" in Simon Rawidowicz's phrase, was to be buried—like the biblical Jephthah—in the cities of the land, in 1391, in 1414, in 1492, in years prior and in years since. Among the other tragedies which Jewish tradition associates with the Ninth of Ab is that very one of 1492—the expulsion from Spain. Tombs are for mourning; I shall go to Catalonia.

IF YOU wish to find Jews in Catalonia with whom to share the fast, you must go to Barcelona, the home of Spain's largest Jewish community and of the first synagogue officially consecrated since the Expulsion. The medieval community of Barcelona met its end, for all practical purposes, relatively early—in 1391. Justice would dictate that the new beginning should take place here. This booming industrial and financial capital of Spain has always gone its own way—politically, ideologically, even visually. This is the hub of the land of Dali, Picasso, Miró, and Antoni Gaudí, whose architecture is encountered not only in the ever visible "gingerbread spires" of the Church of the Holy Family and the Güell Park but, when least expected, at street corners and on the major and minor thoroughfares. The visitor is not at first blush easily reconciled to an architecture which draws its inspiration from the rock formations, flora, and waterfalls of the Catalan countryside rather than from a textbook of solid geometry. But if even Franco had to be somewhat resigned to Catalan audacity, the receptive tourist soon makes his peace with it. Barcelona was the last city to fall to Franco and he knew ever after

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* English translation by Burton Raffel with a preface by Lluís Alpera, an introduction by Fritz Hensey, and an afterword by Thomas F. Glick (Calcutta, Writers Workshop, 1977). Throughout I have occasionally departed from the translation to maintain closer conformity with the original.

that it was the one place of which he had better steer clear. He was to have his revenge.

Culturally, Catalonia (or, more properly, the Catalan regions including Valencia, the Balearic Islands, and Roussillon over the French border) flourished brilliantly during the Middle Ages; Ramon Llull, Ramon Muntaner, Bernat Metge, Arnau de Vilanova, Ausias March—the list is more than impressive. After the union with Castile in the 15th century, the literary language fell into desuetude, although it never ceased to be spoken (the reverse of the situation of Hebrew). Then in the 19th century, romanticism and nationalism came to Catalonia too, and its cultural rebirth, the *Renaixença*, was under way; its literature flourished once again. Under the Republic, there was a measure of autonomy; Catalan was an official language in the schools and its future seemed secure.

And then came Franco. As Jewish Old Jerusalem receded into Mt. Scopus, so did Catalonia recede into Montserrat, the sacred shrine, "*el nostre Sinai*" (our Sinai), where, defiantly, the only publishing in the national tongue took place. There was some relaxation in the 50's but it was more token than real. Throughout this period, like the Jews of Mandate Palestine, the people felt themselves aliens in their own land.

Franco departed—more quietly perhaps than he came—and one could be Catalan again. Under the unexpectedly enlightened guidance of Juan Carlos and Spain's new-found democracy, Catalonia has once again received a degree of autonomy and has exploited it to the full. In sophisticated *ulpan*-type institutions, it is now teaching its teachers correct Catalan to meet the demand in the public schools. Castilian street signs come down and those in Catalan go up. And if the marble signs do not appear quickly enough, hastily prepared paper improvisations are provided or little red and yellow striped stickers demand: *Ho volem en català!* ("We want it in Catalan!"). Street names are changed completely—the Avenida de José Antonio Primo de Rivera is now the Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes and the Avenida del Generalísimo is more descriptively styled the Diagonal. There are magazines, daily papers, radio, theater, films, music, and gradually, television, but above all, there are books—countless books in Catalan on all subjects, Catalan or otherwise, to the extent that many stores stock nothing but books and phonograph records in the national language.

But there is also old Barcelona, the Barri Gòtic, the former center of the medieval community. On the canned tours to "Jewish Spain," now so widely promoted by travel agents, one would be taken to see the Carrer de Call, the street of the Call (*Qahal* or Jewish community), now a not very Semitic business street, and the nearby funerary inscription of Samuel Ha-Sardi, expropriated as a building-stone in a nondescript edifice on the Car-

rer de l'Arc de Sant Ramon del Call. But one may retreat from the tourist atmosphere of the Gothic Quarter and imagine things as they once were.

THE Ninth of Ab is approaching—any ninth of Ab—1981, 1492, 1391, 1263. In the great cathedral of Barcelona lies the crypt of Ramon de Penyafort, the Dominican who founded the schools for Semitic languages which were to serve as bases for the missions to the Muslims and Jews. Ramon was present at the Disputation of 1263 when Paul Christià, a Jewish apostate, confronted Nahmanides. Such disputations, formal debates organized by the Church at which Jewish participation was coerced, were designed to expose the falsity of Judaism and hence to win fresh converts to Christianity. But sometimes the Jew "won." Nahmanides' success in the debate led to his having to flee Spain and Catalan Jewry was to be on the run ever since. The pogroms of 1391 allegedly massacred a third, converted (forcibly or voluntarily) a third, and left a third as a remnant. After the debacle of the Disputation of Tortosa in 1414, Catalan Jewry was whittled down even more.

But we felt ourselves alone

In front of the window, in front of the blind-man's

Tiny blank pupils, the strange fortune-teller
And we did not forget what the ancient law
commanded:

"Thou shalt not lie, nor steal, nor kill . . ."—
Eternal rules,

Valid everywhere, in Israel and in the *Golah*.

(*The Bull-Hide XXXIX*)

In 1492 it was over.

So MUCH for those who "did not forget." And who is to pass judgment on those who did?

Sometimes

One man must die for a people,

But never a people

For one man.

(*The Bull-Hide XLVI*)

Or for one God? A cultivated Castilian Jew, Solomon Halevi, became a cultivated Castilian Christian shortly before or after the pogroms of 1391. For the Jewish historians, it was after—he was forced into it. For the Spanish historians, it was before—he saw the light of his own accord. One is inclined to side with the latter. Solomon, now Pablo de Santa María, became a protégé of Cardinal Pedro de Luna, later to be anti-Pope Benedict XIII and convener of the Disputation of Tortosa in 1414. Pablo was sent to the Sorbonne and eventually attained the dignity of the see of Burgos. After his conversion, a younger associate, Joshua Lorki, wrote him a letter: Why did you do it? Money? Power? Gentile women? No, Joshua admitted he knew him better. Was it perhaps be-

cause of despair over the interminable exile? Or did he indeed have a religious experience? Pablo responded, apologizing for his rusty Hebrew—he was out of practice. That, of course, was a touch of irony; his Hebrew was still quite competent. Fate was less so. That is all of the apologia it has left us; his answers are lost.

Whatever those answers were, we next find Joshua Lorki going the way of Pablo and becoming Mestre Jerònim de Santa Fe. His Jewish contemporaries gave him a Hebrew acronym, M.G.D.F. (*megaddef*—the blasphemer), for his role as the chief Christian antagonist at Benedict's Tortosa Disputation. The scholar assigned the task of writing the article on Joshua Lorki in the old *Jewish Encyclopedia* wrote two articles instead—one on the Joshua Lorki who chided his former mentor for his conversion and another on Joshua Lorki the renegade. But there was no need to bifurcate Joshua; there was only one. It is just that the doubts and anguish had been building up in Joshua's mind, so that in one last paroxysm of zeal he lashed out at Pablo and then followed in his footsteps.

Why did Solomon and Joshua convert? Why did so many Aragonese and Catalan Jews pass over to Christianity after the calamities of 1391 and the disillusionment of 1414? Did they, like Abner of Burgos a century before, witness a rain of crosses from heaven with a message instructing them to take a lesson from the misery of the Jewish people and seek a better way? Non-mystics have come to respect the legitimacy of the mystical experience, but the unconverted still resist recognition of the conversion experience. Few beyond professional students of religion or those who have undergone a conversion experience themselves have taken them seriously.

I stood in the Cathedral of Barcelona observing mass. It was being conducted in Catalan and some non-Catalan Spanish tourists were grumbling that it was a disgrace that they couldn't hear mass in their own language in their own country. As I contemplated the problems of multinational states, I looked up. There above the altar was the clear and unmistakable outline of the Star of David. I stood transfixed. Was it my turn now?

I am not comfortable with this sort of supernatural intervention in my life. Were the Messiah to appear at my door, I would ask him please to wait—I have some galley's to read. But I could think of no rational explanation for the Star's presence; the ecumenical movement had surely not penetrated the Cathedral of Barcelona.

Mass was over and the congregation left. I walked up to the altar. The Star was still there—well, almost there. There was a railing, and the railing was held up by two bars in the shape of a V forming a triangle, and the lighting produced

certain shadows, and what wasn't there my mind filled in.

It was a valuable lesson—the soul sees what it is disposed to see. And so, I, the newly converted Franciscus de Dubia Fide, walked over to the crypt of Ramon de Penyaforat to slip him a note of farewell on behalf of my forebears. I had done this before. Last time it was in Latin, now it is in his mother tongue. If I were a character in a story of a certain author, it would be in Yiddish. It would present no problem to a linguist like him and, in any event, it is always the same message and not a very original one at that. General MacArthur said it first.

From Cathedral to synagogue. The synagogue is on the Calle Porvenir, Future Street, though it is not clear what future this modest byway off the Diagonal might have. You ring the bell and wait for someone to let you in. This is no romantic relic of Iberian crypto-Judaism but a symptom of European Jewish insecurity in the face of terrorism. The congregation was small, very small for a community so sizable: a handful of Moroccan Jews sitting on the floor about to recite Lamentations. One should not, however, take the paucity of numbers as a sign of a lack of piety. It was, after all, August and in Iberia in August things grind haltingly if they do not grind to a halt completely. (Once in the Lisbon "Sephardi" synagogue, we were still waiting at 11 A.M. for a *minyan*. Two men looked at each other: "*Farvos kumt men nisht in shul?*" "*Nu, s'iz yetst ferias.*" "*Why isn't anyone coming to synagogue?*" "*Well, it's ferias [vacation-time] now.*")

The service was dignified but abrupt. There was nothing of the turbulence and semi-carnival atmosphere of the Ninth of Ab in Jerusalem. Not that one missed it, but this was not what I had come for. Perhaps I should have been in Tortosa.

THAT scenes of horror can take place in paradisiacal surroundings always unnerves me. I visited Constance once to see the site of the Council which deposed Benedict XIII and which burned Jan Hus. The surroundings of the house where Hus was sequestered, the countryside, Lake Constance, were all so exquisitely beautiful that I marveled that nature itself did not recoil in horror and turn brown and wither. Perhaps its beauty was not after all a sign of indifference but a brilliant blush of embarrassment? It was the same in Tortosa, which to me represented one of the most dismal episodes of Sephardi anguish. The Ebro, the hills, the very charm of the town, the view from the balcony of the *parador* which made the term "castles in Spain" more than a figure of speech, stood in marked contrast to that pathetic campaign of an exhausted Catalo-Aragonese Jewry who had no strength left to carry on the fight.

My object was to see the episcopal palace, the supposed locale of the Tortosa Disputation, and

still the headquarters of the diocese. I appeared at the time appointed for opening but no one appeared. A policeman thought that sooner or later someone would come. The shopkeeper across the street told me exactly—to the moment—what would happen, and it was as she prophesied. The wooden gate opened on one of the loveliest Gothic courtyards in Spain. One could amble about the courtyard but the audience chambers themselves were locked.

I asked if I could enter. An attendant went through countless boxes of keys, assembled a collection, and finally found one that fit. There were the rooms—gracious and handsome—but they and the building which housed them were of such modest proportions that only by seeing them could one realize how Solomon Ibn Verga, the 16th-century Hebrew chronicler, told a tall tale indeed when in his propagandistic *Scepter of Judah* he made this little conference hall sound like St. Peter's, in order to magnify the dignity and distinction of the Jews in his readers' eyes. A side door led out to a small balcony overlooking the Ebro. Again, without—tranquility, calm, sunlight; within—dismay, discord, doom.

There was nothing left to do but see the rest of Tortosa, and the supposed site of the *call* (Jewish community)—Jerusalem Street, the customary lapidary inscriptions, the stone recalling Meliosa, daughter of Judah, the Cathedral. There would be no crowds in the Cathedral here and there would be no Star of David. There was only silence and solitude and a baptismal font. I fixated on the baptismal font. How many Jews had been dragged to this font and how many had just given up the struggle and gone of their own accord? Hebrew writers of the period referred to the waters of baptism as "the iniquitous waters" (Psalm 124:5), and many were the Jews who had been inundated by them.

Suddenly and quite unexpectedly, I too was inundated by a flood of water, not from the font, but from my own eyes. Clearly, like Joshua Lorki, a torrent of emotion of which I was not consciously aware had been welling up within me waiting to burst forth at this moment. No memorial to the destruction of Jewry, however theatrical and however pretentious, could have the effect on me that that simple understated baptismal font had. Traditionally, Anglo-Saxon males do not know how to cry—with the result that, on the odd occasion that they do, they may not know how to stop. I wept a *bekhiyyah le-dorot*, a weeping of generations—not so much a wail of lamentation as a cry of frustration at having been hounded and importuned and cajoled for decade after decade and century after century by those who shrieked, "Do not be what you are but be what we want you to be!" or, indeed, "Do not be at all," by those who could not grasp and would not see that

Men are different, and speech is different,
And there are many names for one unique love.
(*The Bull-Hide XXX*)

Yes, I had felt the Ninth of Ab as I had never felt it before and perhaps never shall again. The waters which flowed over Joshua Lorki were to sweep him along new currents; the waters which flooded me at that moment were not intended to alter my course.

BUT even so, I had had a surfeit of waters of despair. Other waters flowed in Spain and I was intent on seeing them. In Besalú in the province of Gerona, there is a medieval *mikvah*, a ritual bath, still intact. It was discovered by chance a few years ago and preserved as a sort of monument, one of the chief tourist attractions in Besalú. I was not eager to negotiate the Spanish highways and so set out, as I had many times, taking my chances. The rapid Catalán-Talgo brought me to Gerona in an hour, and the first cab driver to approach was willing to make the trip. He wasn't sure why I wanted to go there. There were better places—Roman ruins, beaches; why Besalú? I tried to explain. I proffered a few sentences in Catalan as a gesture but it was far less painful for both of us to continue in Castilian.

As Iberian towns have a way of doing, Besalú appeared almost without warning—a splendid Romanesque bridge leading into a splendid Romanesque town. Signs heralded the "*mikvd*" and we found it with ease. It was of course sealed by an iron gate. My driver asked a nearby resident for help, and we were directed to go to the town hall to get the key. It was a fairly simple matter: a tour would be leaving in a quarter of an hour to see the monuments of the city. We set out, a dozen Catalans and I. The young guide spoke Castilian for my benefit but there was really no need—the Catalan of the Geronese region is so precise and clear that it was readily understandable. The guide pointed out the location of the *call* and the "university of the Jews." We went from Romanesque church to Romanesque guild hall to Romanesque church with appropriate delays to find the appropriate keys. One was so large, it seemed that it must have been a donation of St. Peter himself. "*Ah, la claueta*" (the little key), a member of the party joshed.

Then finally the *mikvah*. It is situated near the Fluvià River, so that the water could flow into it conveniently. You descend a flight of stairs and turn right. Another short flight of stairs leads you to the basin of the pool which is now dry. A small aperture in the wall provides light. The guide carefully explained what a *mikvah* was and how this one was discovered. The Catalan tourists seemed not to know quite what to make of it and my driver seemed not to know quite what to make

of me wanting to come such a distance for this. With my eye, I measured every step, every corner, every stone. When we emerged, I thanked the guide. He looked at me apologetically: "I know you probably wanted to spend more time in the *mikwa*—but the others weren't very interested. But I am. You see, my great grandfather. . . ." Yes, my friend, we call it "roots." These days, every Ashkenazi Jew needs his Sephardi progenitor and every Spaniard his ancestral Jew.

My driver was waiting. As long as we're here, could we detour to Castelló d'Empúries? There is another Carrer dels jueus there and who knows what I might find. "It's quite a detour," he replied, "Yes, but isn't it worth it?" "Look, *hombre*, I wouldn't come here but you're all excited." (My elation was showing.) "So, I won't tell you not to go there."

WE arrived at Castelló d'Empúries at 2 P.M. One should never arrive anywhere in the Mediterranean world at 2 P.M. *Tancat, cerrado, fermé, chiuso, mughlaq, sagur*—all variations on the universal theme: CLOSED. But at least I could wander about the streets of the putative *call* easily marked by the shadow cast over them by the distinctive belfry of the church, and I could view the church and the adjacent *lonja* at leisure. But people were coming out of the church after all! I entered. A teen-age boy gave me a personal tour—the magnificent altarpiece, this from the 11th century, that from the 12th, this from the 14th. I thanked him and offered him a suitable sum. Oh, no. He wouldn't take it. I bought some tourist literature and postcards instead. As an afterthought, he suggested I step out onto a terrace. It was freshly whitewashed with plants placed about. Since Franco's demise, Catalonia has been given funding for all sorts of restoration projects and the church was one of them.

In the process of restoration, some inscribed stones had recently been excavated and these were neatly mounted in the stucco wall. Then—for the stone shall cry out of the wall—there facing me in Spanish rabbinic script was the inscription, "Gone to his rew[ard] . . . Year [5]170 [1410]." I had not expected to meet this son of Israel here, but I reflected on how he, whoever he was, had witnessed the atrocities of 1391 but was spared what was to come shortly after. I was grateful for the contact—only a stone bath, only a fragment of a gravestone, but Iberia has not left us much more, so one is thankful for anything. I returned to the cab. "Did you find anything?" "I certainly did!" "¡Estupendo!" My enthusiasm began to rub off even on him. He started to ask me questions, good questions, intelligent questions. It occurred to me that he might have made a good graduate student—but then it occurs to me quite often that some graduate students might have made good cab drivers.

IF JUDAISM recognized holy cities outside of the Holy Land, Gerona would be one of them. The Catalonian Safed, it was the home of the great mystics, disciples of the Provençal, Isaac the Blind, Ezra, Azriel, Nahmanides. To walk there is to walk hallowed ground. The *call* of Gerona is undergoing urban renewal—luxury apartments, elegant shops, boutiques. It is all done so tastefully, though, that the medieval character remains intact. There is little specific that remains. A synagogue was supposedly here, another institution was supposedly there. The Moorish baths, which allegedly became Jewish baths after the early *reconquista* of Catalonia, are still well preserved. But, most important, you feel that you are walking the streets that Nahmanides and Isaac the Blind might have walked.

Yet who here ever heard of Nahmanides, who of Isaac the Blind? In a shop window there is an ad for a performance of Indian music, part of *Culturalia 79*, a cultural festival sponsored by La Caixa, a banking institution, in honor of its seventy-fifth anniversary. The poster has a Miró at the top commissioned by La Caixa for the occasion. It is attractive and I go over to read it:

*Recital de música Hindú
Amb la col·laboració del Centre Isaac el Cec*

The Isaac the Blind Center? Is this *the* Isaac the Blind? There can be no doubt. The address: Pati dels Rabins de Girona, the Gerona Court of the Rabbis. I wander up one of the narrow inclined alleys to the center. It is a charming, partly enclosed, partly open-air performance hall. An impromptu cello recital is taking place. No, no one really knows who Isaac the Blind was—but in a strange way, he is remembered.

It is in a strange way that Catalonia remembers its Jews. There is a Catalan fascination with Jews which borders on philo-Semitism, a philo-Semitism which has been succinctly outlined in Thomas Glick's afterword to Burton Raffel's translation of *The Bull-Hide*. To my mind, the most telling example was an incident from the Six-Day War of 1967. Castilian graffiti in Barcelona proclaimed "*Mueran los judíos*" ("Death to the Jews"). In Catalan, the message was "*Visca Israel*" ("Long Live Israel"). Now, too, Castilian wall posters in Barcelona, hawking a certain American book, proclaimed "*Holocausto-mentira*" ("Holocaust-Lie"). The Catalan bookstores, though, were selling phonograph records of Israeli songs sung by Catalan troupes. It is not all that clear-cut, of course. Some seem to have a very foggy notion of what a Jew is altogether. In one store, when I asked for books about Jews, I was offered one on Freemasonry. On the other hand, it did not occur to the proprietor that a booklet on the Jewries of Lérida was something I might be interested in.

Over the years, apart from the many fine scholarly studies which have appeared as monographs

or in the journal *Sefarad*, occasional popular works have been published. There was Carles Rahola i Llorens's *Els jueus a Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1929[?]) and more recently, *El jueus i nosaltres* (*The Jews and We*, Barcelona, 1977) by Lluís Marco i Dach. These, however, are by and large merely surveys and catalogues. (I do not speak here of the recent surge of interest in the Xuetes of Mallorca, the pariah group of "crypto-Jews," who form a subject quite unto themselves.) Recently the talented historian and philologist Jaume Riera i Sans has published a volume of medieval Jewish wedding songs in Catalan (*Cants de noces dels jueus catalans*, Barcelona, 1974), and has also edited a volume of medieval Hebrew poetry translated into Catalan by Eduard Feliu i Mabres, *Poemes hebraics de jueus catalans* (Barcelona, 1976)—adding them, as it were, to the national patrimony.

BUT there is a more subtle form of Catalan philo-Semitism, which has been best expressed in Catalan literature and most notably in the writings of Salvador Espriu. Espriu is one of Catalonia's, if indeed not one of Spain's, finest poets. Last year he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Barcelona, which, was, according to the Barcelona daily, *Avui*, a hint to the Nobel Prize committee. As a poet of reconciliation, he is highly popular in all of Spain and is read in Castilian translation and in bilingual editions.

Esriu began his academic career in classical history, Egyptology, and Semitics but this was cut short by the civil war. Yet this, plus a childhood indoctrination into the legends of the Book of Esther by an aunt, has left an indelible Hebraic mark on his work, especially his play *First History of Esther* (*Primera història d'Esther*, 1948)* and his most famous work, *The Bull-Hide*.

The *First History of Esther*, an "improvisation for puppets," takes place simultaneously in Shushan and in the mythical Catalan coastal town of Sinera (a reverse anagram of *Arenys de Mar*, Espriu's ancestral home and the scene of his early childhood). The protagonists of the biblical story are represented by puppets who are witnessed on the stage by a live audience composed of the inhabitants of Sinera. (Espriu insists that any resemblance to Goethe's *Das Jahrmarktfest zu Plundersweilern* is coincidental.) The two mythic casts are separated by gaps of space and time which seemingly cannot be spanned, and yet they interact—"Susa, far from here, near to here." This inter-involvement takes place first on a superficial, almost farcical level, as when Vashti decides to flee to Sinera with a lover and a cook who will prepare all sorts of delicacies for them during the flight. The real fusion, however, is achieved by the presence of the *Altísim*, the blind storyteller of Sinera. (The blind are prominent in Espriu since it

is only they, spared the vision of this world and its illusions, who can truly see.) The storyteller instructs his audience as to the real message of the biblical myth for them: one subject people parallels another subject people; the one is threatened with extermination by Haman (read: Hitler)—the other by a fratricidal civil war which has shed the blood and destroyed the identity of the Catalan, indeed of the Spanish, people.

It is fratricide which is the supreme sin, but Espriu makes it clear that fratricide is not only murder of one brother, one fellow national, by another, but violence perpetrated by any man against any other man—Spain's civil war or the Nazi persecution of the Jews. When Haman announces that "all men, except for the Jews, are my brothers," Zeresh begs him to spare her the pious platitudes and naiveté: "Jews or not, all men are your enemies." Thus, the *Altísim* charges his listeners to bestow on each other a mutual boon of pardon and tolerance:

Avoid the ultimate crime, the sin of war between brothers. Keep in mind that in the beginning the mirror of truth was shattered into tiny fragments and nevertheless each piece reflects a particle of true light.

Esriu returns to these themes in *The Bull-Hide*, a long poem in fifty-four units tracing the drama of Spain. Employing the textbook image of Spain as a stretched bull-hide tacked onto Europe, the poet here has the bull lift its own hide, this "drum beaten in fear," as a banner which is so drenched in blood that it cannot be dried out. Once again the saga of Spain is told in images of the Jewish experience in exile, in the *Golah* (Hebrew terms recur throughout), and once again this saga of Spain is that of the supreme crime: "a war with no victory/a war between brothers." The scenes of fear and terror—the death of the sky-bird, the suicide of Iehudi the old tailor (whom we know from the *First History of Esther*) when the wine runs out—soften gradually into a realization that a morbid dwelling on the past leads nowhere and that fear must be countered by reconciliation—"Let dialogue follow freely from point to point"—and by hope—"Mills of Sepharad:/ Dreams will be converted/Bit by bit into reality." Sepharad. "Spain"—*Espanya*—does not connote for the Catalan the totality of the Hispanic peoples, and so Espriu has recourse to the Hebrew to express his concept of a land in which no nation will be in exile in its own home. Sepharad's reconciliation will be its liberation:

Listen, Sepharad: men cannot exist
Not free
When Sepharad knows it or not, we cannot
ever exist
Not free.

*Barcelona, Edicions 62 (1967).

And the people cry, in one voice "Amén."
(*The Bull-Hide XXXVIII*)

Catalonia seems to understand the Jew as few other nations have. And so too the Jew can have some special understanding for Catalonia. The cry "*perro catalán*" ("Catalan dog") or "*mercader catalán*" ("Catalan businessman") is one that will not be lost on a Jewish ear. For centuries, after the Expulsion and up to this day, there has been a persistent Jewish fascination with Spain, felt no less by Ashkenazim who may be quite indifferent to their own Eastern European origins than by Sephardim. On one level, it is due to an admiration and a nostalgia for a brilliant epoch in Jewish history. In the case of Catalonia, there is perhaps another dimension—the identification of one n/ever-dying people with another n/ever-dying people, a satisfaction in the sharing of one nation's rebirth by another continually reborn.

THERE is no promise that the cycle has come to an end; that is after all why there still is a Ninth of Ab. After relating Mordecai's glory, the *Altissim* continues that "another prince succeeded Ahasuerus on the throne of Susa and perhaps once again persecuted the tragic

tribes of the Wandering. And the monotonous chain of struggles and assassinations, infamy and debauchery, continues, for in Persia and throughout the world a cruel folly has always enslaved man and made of his history a bad dream of dark and arid pain." No, what has been cannot permit euphoria—but neither need it demand obsessive brooding.

So, when someone
asks us,
Sometimes,
in a harsh voice:

"Why have you stayed
here in this hard, dry land,
this land soaked in blood?
This is surely not
the best of the lands you came upon
in the long
trial
of the Golah."—

With a small smile
that remembers our fathers
we only say:

"In our dreams, yes, it is."
(*The Bull-Hide VII*).

One comes to mourn and leaves with hope—and
that is as it should be.

The Surrealists in New York

Lionel Abel

I VISITED Meyer Schapiro one summer night in 1942 and found him engaged in conversation with a slender, well set-up, quite handsome young man, with blond hair falling in pale, flat lines across a high forehead. This was Robert Motherwell, then only up to the prolegomenon of what has been a brilliant career.

Motherwell had followed some courses by Schapiro and had studied the aesthetics of the American philosopher, David Prall, whom, during the evening, he frequently cited. Apparently blind to his own rather Saxon blondness, he stressed that evening the fact—to him, it seemed a fact—that Anglo-Saxon painters lack pictorial imagination. Certainly he would not speak that imprecisely today. His own writings on art are now quite precise and often elegant. He was probably expressing the influence over him at the time of the Surrealist painters, mainly Latins, who were then in New York, and most particularly that of Matta, with whom, as I discovered later, he was deeply involved.

I said he seemed young to me then. To be sure, he was younger than I. Delmore Schwartz, as I recall, lamented just a few years before he died: "There was a time when I used to think Dwight Macdonald was so much older than I—and I can't feel that way any more." And now Delmore is gone, and Dwight, whom he had thought so much older than himself, is still sociably shouting down those of his dinner guests who happen to be in the right against him. Probably the reason I was so struck by Motherwell's youth that evening was a certain lack of ease he showed in conversation. It was that of a man not yet fully in touch with himself. Some years later, Motherwell noted this aspect of his personality in a piece in *Possibilities*, a review he edited with Harold Rosenberg, even characterizing himself there as at times "inauthentic." Unhappily, the review was limited to just one issue, and the reason, as Rosenberg told me with some glee, was that Motherwell had decided to undergo psychoanalysis, and his analyst had found Rosenberg bad for his ego. It struck me

that someone who would drop you for the sake of his ego would have to be someone who had taken you up for his ego's sake.

Now on the night I met him, Motherwell made a request of Schapiro which in a way expressed his peculiar lack of contact with what I have come to recognize to be a very real intelligence. He wanted Schapiro to tell him of some encyclopedia about the class struggle, so that he could read up on it. Schapiro replied at once: "Fortunately there is no such thing. You can't just read up on class struggle. . . . If you're laid off a job, or have to go on strike, you may find out about it. . . . Also you have to read the radical press . . . regularly." And I think he recommended the paper *Labor Action*, put out by the Shachtmanite faction of the Trotskyists. (Recalling that paper, one realizes that there is no such thing as a radical press today.) "In any case," said Schapiro, "you can't just open a book. . . . To learn about class you have to struggle yourself." Motherwell saw at once that he had been imperceptive and blushed.

He had come to ask Schapiro for advice about working with the Surrealist painters then in New York, and he particularly wanted to find out how to deal with their leader, André Breton, with whom questions relating to the class struggle were bound to come up. I think it was Schapiro who suggested that Motherwell take me along with him on his next meeting with the Surrealist leader.

After that encounter at Schapiro's I saw a lot of Motherwell. I was living on Irving Place in Greenwich Village then, he on Eighth Street, right smack across from Macdougall Street. Those were days when people would drop in on one another without first telephoning. Happy days! I think Motherwell must have liked this sort of Bohemianism; he was anything but formal then, in fact there was something quite unbuttoned about him. I can hardly remember any time between the summer of '42 and the fall of '48 when he didn't have a little paint on his face or even on the tip of his nose, and his shirt always hung out over his pants—this was long before university students had made this their most typical attire. Anyway, it was with a bit of paint on his nose and his shirt hanging out that Motherwell took me to meet André

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Breton, the most courtly person I have ever known.

But before that I had met Matta, to whose apartment on Twelfth Street between Sixth and Fifth Avenues I was taken by Schapiro only a few days after I had seen Motherwell. As I remember, it was a warm summer afternoon and on the way to Twelfth Street from his own apartment on Fourth, Schapiro told me something about the painter I was going to meet. Matta was of Basque origin, but born in Chile, and he was a member of the Surrealist group. In talking about Matta, Schapiro could not help but tell me something about himself. He had been shown two Surrealist paintings, one by an American, Gordon Onslow Ford, and the other by Matta, and he had remarked, pointing to the Matta, "The painter who did this was born in the country, . . . the other in a big city." And it turned out that Schapiro had been right. "But how did you know Matta was born in the country?" I asked. "From his exuberant color," was the reply.

We went up to the apartment. As I remember, it was a three- or four-room place, quite modest, but comfortable, and not without elegance, qualities which are not often found together in the apartments available in New York City today.

Matta welcomed Schapiro warmly, and I was introduced. The painter was very youthful, under thirty, and he was nervously alive, with deep brown eyes and wonderfully straight black hair. (He did not at all resemble the young Rimbaud, as the late Julian Levi has claimed in *Memoirs of an Art Gallery*. Rimbaud, from the photographs we have of him, was a very blond, very Nordic Frenchman, and Matta is swarthy and dark-haired, like the Latins of the wine country.) He laughed a great deal and his laughter immediately engaged you. It trilled and trilled, going up, up, upward, on soprano wings. Having heard Matta laugh, you wanted to say something to make him laugh again, but as it turned out, it was Matta who said the things which made *you* laugh, and him, too. For like most intelligent men I have known, he was accustomed to making himself laugh and he liked doing this, providing both the cause and the effect, humor and the exemplary enjoyment of it.

He introduced his wife, Ann, a young woman still in her twenties, from Lincoln, Illinois, of which I believe her father had been the mayor. Julian Levi has described her as unobtrusive. Now Ann Matta was certainly not forward, and she was not very articulate either, but she could not be called unobtrusive, for she was quite beautiful, with rather wild eyes and an expression I can only describe as one of infinite regret. But regret for what? For being married to Matta, who was so amusing, so charming?

We sat down and Matta produced a bottle of absinthe. He announced: "This is not anisette . . . this is the real thing." So we, who thought we were the real thing, had a drink of the real thing.

I had no inkling at the moment that for the next few years Matta would be one of my closest friends.

WHAT I valued most in him during those years was his sense of fun. Not many painters have humor, and Matta is one of the best of those who have. In his paintings and drawings he can be as funny as Miró or Magritte. And when you got to know him, you began to depend on his humor and didn't feel quite up to par when he wasn't around. But there were also occasions when his humor represented a certain danger. An example: I had collapsed a lung and had to lie on my back for six weeks until it inflated. Matta came to see me, as did other friends, but he was the one who made me laugh, and this was what I was not supposed to do, that is, if I wanted to recover. But I didn't just want to recover. I also wanted to laugh, at things Matta said.

One day I was visited by Nicola Chiaromonte, one of the most interesting of the Italian intellectuals in exile here. He was my good friend, too, a wonderful friend. I can honestly say I've never known anyone I've liked better or respected more. While Chiaromonte was with me Matta arrived, bringing with him all sorts of good things: food, drink, and a tape recorder, so that I could do some work while I was recovering. But what meant most to me then was not his intention, however generous, but the manner in which he transformed the atmosphere of my place with a few words that set us laughing. Matta did an imitation of Harry Truman—this was the first year of Truman's Presidency—flying through a snowstorm to meet his mother in Missouri, how he embraced her when they met, just which cheek of hers was kissed, and their dialogue after kissing. Then he went on to develop one of his ideal projects. He was going to arrange a musical concert for dogs at Madison Square Garden. The musicians would play notes too high for humans, but which canine ears could catch. So the concert would be just for dogs. They would all come in limousines, dressed up for the occasion, their owners reduced to the roles of chauffeurs and attendants. And Matta performed the whole concert. He imitated the dogs barking their applause when it was over, and the dogs leaving the Garden filled with music and contentment. I laughed throughout the performance, but Chiaromonte grew more and more somber, finally looked at his watch, and left. Afterward he told me: "I felt I couldn't say anything to amuse you or interest you while he was around."

Once we were well acquainted, Ann Matta told me how she had met her husband. She had gone to Paris in 1939, an art student—I think she was on a tour which was to include Florence and Venice, and in the Parisian *pension* in which she stayed she met Matta. Her story went: Matta, on being introduced, had stared intently at her, then seized hold of her and lifted her in the air over his head.

"Let me down!" she exclaimed. "What are you doing?" Matta replied, "I'm trying to sweep you off your feet." But he did set her down, and then when she told him that the next day she would be in Florence, he said "I'll see you there." When she got to the *pension* in Florence, there was Matta waiting for her. The same thing happened in Venice. They returned to Paris together, were married there, and shortly after took off for the United States just before war was declared.

A happy, a romantic beginning. But the continuation was hardly that. Matta called Ann *pacharito*, "little bird," and she evidently did not like being called that. "He's trying to make me smaller," she said once, when someone asked her why she objected to the name. But I have heard other, more violent explanations of why that name should have been disliked, and why that name was chosen by Matta. In any case, their life when I got to know them, in '42, was already one of bewilderment, frustration, and sadness for the young woman Matta had swept off her feet.

Why people who have been in love separate is to me one of the most interesting of all questions, and I know of no instance in which it can be answered fully. But my reason for dwelling on what happened to the Mattas is that what I saw happen to them, and I saw almost all of it, was also happening to other people I knew. I hardly think I am making of their fate an "instance of *all* fate," to quote Wallace Stevens's expression. But yet the fate of many other people was told in clearer, sharper, and more painful strokes in the life of the Mattas than in the lives of others I knew. Once again, how is one to explain this? The desire to give another pleasure ceases to be a joy and then becomes a form of pain. And pain continued under these circumstances is certain to become hate. . . .

BUT I must come back to the summer of 1942. Motherwell, as he had promised, took me to André Breton's apartment on Eleventh Street, and Breton, as he came forward to greet me, took us both with him into the 18th century. The movements of his hands when he talked were graceful, his voice musical, his diction perfect, and his sentences always in syntax: he never failed to take the subjunctive as required. Powerfully built, he gave the impression of a certain effeminateness; in fact he looked rather like Oscar Wilde, though he was, I think, better looking than Wilde, his features being more finely drawn. In revenge, as the French say, his hands were very large, and his fingers huge enough to seem quite monstrous. I often thought—influenced no doubt by his resemblance to Wilde—that those huge fat fingers had absorbed into their substance any feelings in him that were brutal, or in any case indelicate. Maybe these were the very fingers that had painted the portrait of Dorian Gray. . . .

In his apartment on Eleventh Street between Fourth and Bleecker Streets the walls were covered with paintings by Surrealist painters. As you walked up and down the living room conversing with Breton, those paintings looked at you from two sides of the room. Maybe some calculation had gone into this. Perhaps he thought you could not walk with impunity between the rows of Surrealist paintings, as, it has been said, you cannot under the palms. Reserved, always grave even when playful, very courteous yet capable of sudden extraordinary rages, Breton was, in my very short acquaintance with him, always likable and always compelling. Alfred Rosmer, the socialist, Communist, early Trotskyist, member of the Second, the Third, and then the Fourth International, became acquainted with Breton by chance during the late 40's; his closest neighbor in Vence on the Côte d'Azur happened to be Breton. Rosmer told me in Paris that he found Breton to be so good and noble a person that he often deeply regretted never having been interested in the theories of Surrealism.

Was Breton really noble? In appearance, certainly. His voice had a noble music to it, and there was nobility in his manners and in his feeling for gesture. But more fundamentally? Certainly there is something noble about his prose, and I, for one, find his poems beautiful, as in his farewell to the painter Arshile Gorky, who hanged himself in his Connecticut studio:

How high you are
In the air
Less than in what you leave us
Less than in your name
Aimed at the great storms of my heart

And he held ideas that are certainly romantic: he held for instance that true lovers could reach orgasm by simply listening to each other's heartbeat.

But there was another aspect to André Breton. When Violette Nozières, a Parisian schoolgirl, killed both her parents by putting rat poison she had obtained from the Pasteur Institute in their soup, Breton hailed her deed and placed her as a heroine above Jeanne d'Arc. And he celebrated her deed in a poem:

With all the curtains of the world
drawn over your eyes
It's no use whatever
In front of their breathless mirrors
Their stretching the cursed bow of
ancestry and posterity
You no longer resemble anyone living
or dead
Mythological to your fingertips
Your prison is the mooring buoy they
try to reach in their sleep
They all come back to it, it burns
them

"Mythological to your fingertips." Why? Because

she had murdered her parents? But was Breton in favor of parent-murder? And how is one to understand this assertion in *The Second Manifesto of Surrealism*: "The simplest Surrealist act consists in going, revolver in hand, into the street and firing as many shots as possible at random into the crowd?" "This sentence has, of course, been too much quoted," writes the French philosopher Ferdinand Alquié in his book *The Philosophy of Surrealism*. He grants this much, though: "The fact remains that Breton wrote it."

And I associate with Breton's definition of the "simplest Surrealist act" something else which I think in an even clearer way expressed his decision to put an end to further searching for the sacred with some assertion that it had been found. In the 50's, Alberto Giacometti told me that at one time in the 30's, known as the heroic period of Surrealism, Breton had asked him to sculpt an idol which the Surrealists could worship. Giacometti, an honest atheist and anarchist, though attracted to the Surrealists because of their approach to art, refused.

A PROBLEM of moral ambiguity came up constantly in the Surrealist movement and in all dealings with Breton, and I think it was allied to an ambiguity about spontaneous creation which the Surrealists, under Breton's influence, refused to try to clarify. They claimed to write automatically, that is, suspending the intervention of reason. But were their writings automatic? When Breton showed me his "Ode to Charles Fourier" (written in his hand), there were many corrections in the text. I should say much of it was probably written automatically, but still there were corrections.

However, that is not the important point. The important ambiguity in their behavior and their thought lay in their insistence that they were not interested in art or in literature, while at the same time they were striving to succeed, even as artists and writers who were not Surrealists, in literary and artistic careers. At the Eighth Street Club during the 50's, Max Ernst, speaking for the Surrealist expression in painting and literature, said that Surrealists were not interested in creating beautiful works or proving that they were talented in the use of pictorial or verbal forms. What were they interested in? In discovering something about the subconscious. Had not the French philosopher Jean Wahl defined poetry as "consciousness of the unconscious"? All the same, Ernst's statement implied that Surrealists were not interested in being described as artists. I answered from the floor that they were. Why, I wanted to know, did Surrealists exhibit their paintings, why were they interested in reviews of their work? Didn't they like praise as much as the abstract painters did? Ernst was a man of great charm, and he replied thus: Yes, they liked praise just as much, but they didn't want to earn it. But this was patently untrue, as became

clear when I asked him if he would say that they hadn't earned praise, and he was unwilling to answer roundly that they hadn't.

Ambiguity in moral matters and ambiguity as to the right use of deliberation in writing and painting, these are the two aspects of what could be called the Surrealist Pact (with the devil?). But the moral ambiguity is the one that interests me here. I recall a meeting of the group at Breton's, in which the latter, yielding to one of his unanticipated rages, against precisely Max Ernst, insisted that he leave, even opening the door so that he could do so more quickly. As Max Ernst made his way down the stairs, Breton shouted after him, "You are a monster of egotism!" Whereupon Matta went up to Breton and said, "But André, aren't we all such monsters, and isn't that what you want us to be?" I do not recall that Breton answered "No." And I do not think he could have answered Matta's question unequivocally.

BRETON incarnated his movement. I use this word because when, in 1950, the French Surrealist youth, led by an American expatriate named Patrick Walberg, informed Breton that he was no longer a Surrealist (in his absence they had voted to expel him from the group) Breton replied with this shout (and right he was this time to shout): "*I am Surrealism!*" And he was Surrealism, what was left of it, when, after the fall of France, he came to the United States. But the lively and creative period of this movement was over. The advanced positions Breton had taken—his support for the writings of Lautréamont and the ideas of Freud—had been widely accepted. The painters and poets he had backed were all by then famous. On the other hand, some of the Surrealist ideas were now discredited—and most particularly by the political successes of Nazism. It was hardly revolutionary to praise sadism while Hitler's agents were practicing it; and in fact the support for Sade was dropped during the war years and only revived much after the war—this time, curiously enough, by people persuaded of Marxism, people like Peter Weiss, the German playwright, and the Parisian Structuralists.

In any case, Breton, in New York City, past middle age, a cultural hero and also a hero of anti-culture, a successful revolutionary, widely suspected by his followers of now wanting to profit personally from the revolutions he had promoted, wary, disabused, alert to everything, and yet with an incredible capacity to become naive at a moment's notice—that is, if he had to—cut the figure of a leader in a time of cultural shocks; a man who had come, not unscathed but not deeply wounded, through any number of volleys of slings and arrows. In fact, as early as 1932, in *Communicating Vases*, he had announced: "Beauty will be convulsive—or it will not be."

Breton had visited Mexico in 1939. He had been

with Leon Trotsky a guest of Diego Rivera's; thus Breton had had many conversations with Trotsky. They signed a joint declaration on art and literature which appeared in *Partisan Review* in 1940. Naturally they did not agree on all matters, and sometimes their differences led to serious arguments. One bitter argument, according to Breton, was over their different evaluations of Zola and Jules Romains. Trotsky had been reading Romains' portmanteau novel, *Men of Good Will*—everybody read it during the 30's. I had friends—I won't mention names—who would not go out with girls unacquainted with *Men of Good Will* (what could one talk to them about?). And Clifton Fadiman, then the literary critic for the *New Yorker*, had made this pronouncement: "We shall be remembered as the generation that read Jules Romains." Well, today nobody reads *Men of Good Will*, though it is, in fact, a very readable book, civilized, engaging, and full of gossip, political and literary.

Now Trotsky had put Romains above Zola as a novelist, and Breton would not accept this judgment. Not a doubt of it, Breton was right on this matter. The interesting question is why Trotsky should have been so mistaken in his judgment. For Trotsky was often an excellent literary critic. His essay on Céline, written right after the publication of *Journey to the End of the Night*, is still the best assessment of that writer. Why was he mistaken about Romains' novel? Here one can only speculate. In one of his articles on the Moscow Trials, Trotsky made a brilliant comparison between the manner in which the GPU obtained confessions and the manner in which Strigeliuss, the poet in *Men of Good Will*, who I think represents Romains' understanding of Paul Valéry, went about creating a poem. Actually, I doubt very much whether Valéry wrote poems in accordance with the method of Strigeliuss, but it is very likely that the GPU put together confessions in that way. Perhaps Trotsky overrated Romains' novel because it had enabled him to understand certain things that were taking place in Russia. But here, I think, he was generously confusing his own depth with Romains' sophistication. In any case, he told Breton that Romains was a greater novelist than Zola, to which Breton replied that no one had even succeeded in writing a novel since Huysmans' *La Bas*.

There was another conflict. About this Breton has written himself in his essay, "Prolegomena to a Third Manifesto of Surrealism or Else." In this account, Breton did not reveal, as he did to me, how violent his dispute with Trotsky had been. Apparently there was a dog with Trotsky at Rivera's villa in Coyoacan. Trotsky was fond of it, and as he sat conversing with Breton in the garden, the dog came up, asking to be stroked. Trotsky complied, and stroking the dog's head, he said to Breton, "This is my friend." "My friend!" Breton was shocked. As he wrote in his "Prolegomena," if

one is going to call a dog a friend, then what is to prevent one from calling a lobster retrograde, a mosquito reactionary? He went on, he told me—he is less explicit in his article—to object to what he considered a sentimental rhetorical indulgence on the part of someone who had been as tough-minded as Trotsky during and after the revolution. He had said of the Kronstadt sailors, "We'll shoot them down like partridges." Did not one have a right to expect a greater rhetorical self-control from a man whose nervous hands had held the levers of history?

THIS was the substance of Breton's complaint, and it seems Trotsky for his part was shocked that anyone should be shocked at his calling his dog his friend. As I remember at the time, Harold Rosenberg, to whom I showed Breton's "Prolegomena," and to whom I told what Breton had told me, was sympathetic to Breton's position, and the two of us went through the whole affair again, I taking Trotsky's view and Harold Breton's, and though it wasn't our argument, we too became quite violent in our assertions and denunciations.

The third argument was the worst. Breton had been reading William James, and he came upon the idea that maybe, like parasites on some huge animal, we are all inside or parts of some tremendous organism which we cannot even see. Breton thought that in this notion of James's there might be the basis for a new myth. And he said as much to Trotsky, who was simply outraged at the idea. We did not need new myths, but additional clarity, Trotsky shouted at him. He had not rejected the Third International in order to announce his belonging to some gigantic animal not known even to Breton, or to James for that matter, or to any American Idealist. I do not know what Breton said in reply, but in his "Prolegomena," he proposed "The Great Invisibles" as a new myth for the Surrealist group.

It is interesting to note that such differences could obtain between revolutionary leaders in politics and culture—even when they agreed politically. Paralleling the differences between Trotsky and Breton with regard to the value of reason and myth was one quite as sharp on a less elevated matter, that of intoxicants. The German scholar and literary critic, Walter Benjamin, whose radicalism has struck a chord among contemporary intellectuals, hailed the achievements of Surrealism in 1929 thus: "To win the energies of intoxication for the revolution—this is the project about which Surrealism circles in all its books and enterprises. *This it may call its most particular task*" (my emphasis). Benjamin does try to qualify such acceptance of intoxicants somewhat by noting that "... to place the accent exclusively" on them "would be to subordinate the methodical preparation for a revolution." All the same, even as so qualified, his attitude is quite different from the one Trotsky

expresses in *My Life*, in which he praises Markin, an obscure Russian sailor in the Baltic Navy, a gunner and a Bolshevik, through whom, according to Trotsky, "the October revolution was victorious." Why was he so important? Apparently during the Petrograd insurrection there was much looting of the rich wine stores by the rabble. According to Trotsky, Markin instantly sensed the danger and went to fight it: "He guarded the wine stores: when it was impossible to guard them, he destroyed their contents. In high boots, he would wade to his knees in precious wines. Revolver in hand, Markin fought for a sober October." This man, Trotsky claims, "beat off the alcoholic attack of the counterrevolution." To make the issue still more complicated, it should be noted that for some observers of the October events, without the alcohol there might have been no insurrection, no revolution at all.

SOME weeks after our first meeting, Matta invited me to a party at which he was to exhibit a new painting of his, and publicly name it. It was to be something like a baptism but not too much like one. Among those present were the painters Chagall, Masson, Tanguy, Seligman, Motherwell, the composer John Cage, the dealer Pierre Matisse, and of course André Breton. At one point in the evening Matta produced his painting and gave it a name, which was, "The Earth Is a Man."

It might have had any number of names, and I remember asking Breton: "Is there a definite Surrealist theory about how a picture should be named?" "Oh yes," he said. "We have such a theory." What was it? I can't remember the words he used exactly, but the purport was that the name given to a Surrealist painting would have to be such that the picture would remain forever nameless. "Well," I asked him, "take Matta's painting, 'The Earth Is a Man.' Is it nameless, now that he's named it?" "Yes," said Breton. "It is now nameless, because the title, 'The Earth Is a Man,' is completely independent of that painting." (It most certainly was.) "You can think about it without looking at the picture at all. You could type out that title, 'The Earth Is a Man,' and hang the typed letters up by themselves on the wall and they would have some effect on you." "And I suppose," I replied, "you could hang the painting up without the title." "That's just what I meant," said Breton. "But couldn't that have been done before he invited us here to give the painting a title and called it 'The Earth Is a Man'?" "That would have been more difficult," said Breton, unsmiling—he was always grave. "Because, had he shown it to us without having named it, we would have thought it lacked a title."

As for Matta, he was quite happy with his title. In fact I've never in my life seen anyone so excited as he was that night. And he made a little speech about painting and his notions about painting.

He said, "There will never be a recognizable object in a picture of mine. Never. Not one object, not the shadow of an object. No object is good enough to be in a picture of mine. No woman is beautiful enough. Let her hair be green, purple, or pink. No fruit, no bottle, no table, no tree. I will not put them on canvas. Never. I swear it."

I remember asking Breton, "Is that the Surrealist theory of a painting?" "No," Breton answered. "That's his own idea. But as you see, he has charm, and his charm is Surrealist."

What were Matta's paintings like during the years of the war? Schapiro used to say that what Matta painted were *éclats*—bursts—not necessarily of color, though he painted these *éclats* in color, and not in his line drawings of that period, in which there were generally organic forms, often very comical. Now Matta had said that he didn't paint anything, that he would not represent anything in his pictures. On the other hand he would not say that he was painting nothing. He did not claim, as Ad Reinhardt did years later, that he put everything into his paintings by leaving everything out. I think what Matta must have meant was that the "bursts," or explosions, which took place on his canvases, were set off in the act of painting itself, and not calculated in advance. He was an automatic painter from the outset, with all the advantages and disadvantages that implies. I'm speaking of his work, of course, before Gorky came on the Surrealist scene, for Gorky's appearance there was to change everything.

To be sure, the notion that a purely plastic "happening" not rehearsed in advance, but which occurs, so to speak, spontaneously in the act of painting—the notion, I say, that such a happening is an "act," is to me a strange one, and so far I have not been able to find much justification for it. But perhaps action was meant in the weak sense rather than the strong sense of the word. Action in the strong sense has to destroy something, and it is hard to see what a pure plastic happening could destroy, any more than one can see how a burst of sunlight through a window could move around the furniture in a room. I note that Harold Rosenberg in his little monograph on Gorky, comparing that painter to Matta, says that the medium, the combination of paint, brush, and canvas with which Gorky worked, became a "mind" creating plastic ideas. But this is hardly different from the assertion that language itself creates ideas rather than providing a vehicle for expressing them. We are still a long way from action, at least in any strong sense of the meaning of that word.

It was Rosenberg who fathered the notion of "action" painting, and I do not want to drop that idea without some further examination of it. Evidently the term meant something to many painters, and so one cannot just dismiss it, even if in Rosenberg's own writing there does not seem to be sufficient justification for its use. What meanings could it possibly have? It could have the meaning

of the acting out of a fantasy or an impulse, of a convulsion or a spasm in connection with a canvas. As a matter of fact, Lee Krasner, the widow of Jackson Pollock, years ago implied this meaning to the term when she explained a mural Pollock made for Peggy Guggenheim by saying that Pollock's physical movements in making the painting were expressed in its brushstrokes, so that the painting was an action painting insofar as the physical actions involved in painting it were an actual part of its content. This notion of action painting does have meaning, though here too I think it involves the weak meaning of action rather than the strong one.

Is there some other possible content to the term "action" painting? Perhaps what could be understood is that it represents a painting which says nothing, that is to say a painting without words. For objects, recognizable objects, have names, and any painting which refers to objects has words in it, and has to say something. The view has been sustained for a long time now that without such saying, that is without reference to objects which are necessarily also words, no painting can communicate an inner world. And so here would be yet another meaning of the term "action" painting: a painting which does not communicate an inner world. One could perhaps also call this equally well a silent painting, except for this: silence does say something, if only, "I'm not saying anything." But that does not dispose of the matter, for it is probably wrong to translate an abstract painting into any kind of discourse. I would suggest that certain of the abstract paintings of Pollock, of Gorky, and of de Kooning are rather like those mathematical ideas in modern physics which, put into discourse, are self-refuting, but work perfectly well in mathematical physics, which for this reason the French philosopher Kojève has called "silent." So perhaps by action painting Rosenberg meant—or could have meant—"silent" painting.

(It may seem odd to refer to certain agitated abstract expressionist paintings—by Pollock, de Kooning, or Joan Mitchell—as "silent" paintings. The category "silent" is perhaps bizarre, but no more so than our time, in which we have often had to depend intellectually on terms that at first sight seem ill-suited. I am thinking not only of "action" painting, but also of Wyndham Lewis's description of satire as a kind of "grinning tragedy." If we can think of a tragedy as "grinning," then may we not think of paintings as "silent" which shout their non-saying, and sometimes even scream it?)

IN THE fall of 1942 Breton asked me to help edit the new Surrealist review he was preparing, *VVV*, and we got out one issue together (Breton's "Prolegomena" appeared in this issue). But our relationship only lasted for about the length of time, a few months as it happened,

needed to get that issue out. People used to say to anyone who said he knew Breton, "Do you know him well enough to have had a fight with him?" I can say I knew him that well.

Two things I learned from Breton. After I had introduced Harold Rosenberg to him—Rosenberg contributed to the first number of *VVV*—Breton said to me: "I know you think Rosenberg is very intelligent. But tell me this. Do you think he's an artist? This is *very* important." I said I thought Rosenberg was an artist, but what really struck me was my own surprise that it should be important to be able to answer this question about someone affirmatively. But if it wasn't important to be an artist, then why were we getting out a magazine devoted to art? I think my difficulty was that I thought of art as something produced by someone we then called an artist because of what he had produced. I did not think of the artist as being himself an expression of his productive life. In other words, I wasn't used to thinking of the artist subjectively. Curiously enough, I had thought of him too behaviorally, as if he were merely the foreman of his factory rather than its main and most significant product. I had thought of art in terms of making, and not in the terms Valéry expressed in his formula: "*Faire, et en faisant, se faire*" ("Make, and in making, make oneself").

Then there was something else I got from Breton. At *VVV* we had received a manuscript from the French critic and scholar René Etiemble—it was an attack on Jacques Maritain. I did not care for the article and I wanted to reject it. I had met Etiemble in 1940 in Chicago and Breton knew that I was acquainted with him. When I said I wanted to reject his article Breton asked me, "What about the man? What about Etiemble? Do you reject him?" "No," I said, "I only want to reject his article." "Well," said Breton, "if you don't reject the man, then I think you'll take the article, especially in view of the much finer articles which you know that he can write." I do think that Breton was quite right about this, and that a magazine should be edited in that spirit.

And now I think it is only right to warn my readers that certain unpleasant things will necessarily be told. They deal with the increasingly cynical view of sentimental and sexual relations which developed in a very few years' time among the Surrealists generally, and then took on an explosive violence in the life of Matta. First of all, Matta broke off with Ann, and under these circumstances: still a young woman, Ann told him she wanted to have a child. He agreed, but on the condition that she agree to a divorce. He suggested this as a *quid pro quo*. He would produce a child with her, if she would obtain a divorce from him. And this is how it happened. They remained together until she became pregnant, and after she gave birth, they were divorced. Only nothing of this kind takes place exactly as planned. She did not give birth to just one child, but to two, twins,

identical twins, and then Matta left her. Shortly afterward he remarried. His new wife was Patricia Connolly, a wealthy New York girl whom he had met at Gloucester.

But I referred to cynicism in the whole Surrealist group, and there are no doubt some who will deny that the Surrealists stood for cynicism in sentimental relations. Now there was one who certainly did. This was Marcel Duchamp, the artist of whom Gorky had said that he had the most sarcastic profile of any person he had ever known. Duchamp's was the willed headstrong cynicism of a man who at some point in his life must have been unbelievably romantic, and he expressed his cynicism with an irresistible verve. He used to argue with me—and this is twenty-five years before Structuralism—that there were no values, only differences. Instead of insisting on the original design of every snowflake, he made the point that every light bulb was different from every other, thus ready-mades were unique. And he delighted in reducing the human body (in painting) to its mechanical conduits for foods and fluids. Who else but he would have thought of entering a urinal into an exhibition of sculpture? "The Bride Stripped by Ferocious Bachelors"—that was his image of sexual relations, and he had great prestige and influence among the Surrealists, especially with Matta.

Of Breton, for example, it is said by Mary Ann Caws in her book on him that he expressed reverence for women. This, no doubt, because of the love lyricism in works of his like *Nadja* and *L'Amour Fou*. In addition to which, there were those signs of nobility in him which I have already indicated. But I am not sure that it extended to those moral matters in which sex is involved. He once boasted that no woman had ever seen him nude when not "pricked out" for women's pleasure, if I may here use Shakespeare's expression. How different is this though from the attitude expressed in Paul Éluard's beautiful but hardly noble line of verse: "Only your kisses are to be kissed." What about the rest of the woman? Is that to be thrown away, obliterated, forgotten? When one looks closely at Breton's love lyricism, one finds what is certainly a noble tonality, but I think it is a dream of the woman that makes the writer sound this note, and not any real woman with her actual problems. Walter Benjamin has seen this too. In his essay on Surrealism he writes: "The lady, in esoteric love, matters least. So, too, for Breton. He is closer to the things that Nadja is close to than he is to her."

Breton insisted on the importance of games. He had said that whenever humanity suffers a catastrophe—and he was in New York City during the time we were undergoing the catastrophe of World War II—games are going to be invented, and in any case ought to be played. He particularly liked "Truth or Consequences" and he liked to set consequences, as for example: you have to

be my slave for this evening, or you must never read anything you wrote for the next year. But I must say that whenever Breton was present and "Truth or Consequences" was played, the game did not get out of hand or become uncivilized. I had played the game with others of his group when he was not present, and then it almost always did get out of hand. I remember being given this consequence for refusing to answer some question truthfully: "Your penalty is this: you must kiss my wife, and right on the mouth." This sort of thing was typical.

HAVING remarried, Matta took a house on the Palisades and used to drive there for weekends, for he maintained his apartment in New York. It was in the New York apartment and in his home on the Palisades that we together planned and brought out a little review, *Instead*. When people asked what the title represented we replied that it meant "instead of all the other reviews." Matta made up the format of the magazine and selected the drawings to be represented and I edited the literary material. With each issue we published—*Instead* did not come out at regular intervals—we threw a party, and at these parties made the magazine up. And so it must be realized that it was not made up by people who were entirely sober.

Matta designed the review in such a way that it was hard to find the continuity of most of the articles. You had to wind your way from page to page hoping to take up again something you had begun to read. He said he wanted the review to be a sort of labyrinth. At the time readers did not appreciate this, but Matta held that if they didn't know how to make their way from page to page they were not intelligent enough to be readers of *Instead*. I think we lost a lot of readers because of this. But since the 60's when taste changed and when absurdism became a kind of faith (I think absurd), people who saw the old issues of *Instead* developed a kind of taste for it. Today a review made up like that would probably find a public.

To get back to the unpleasantness which I announced, at that time many people broke off with each other. Patricia Connolly, so recently married to Matta, expressed her shock that Pierre Matisse was going to leave his wife, Teeny, to whom he had been married for over twenty years. I had no idea when she confided this to me that she was at that moment planning to divorce Matta and marry Pierre Matisse herself, and that the whole thing had been arranged between the two of them. For his part Matta, who was quite sensitive to the breakups that were taking place or threatening around us, began to say that this was a time of hemorrhages, and in accordance with the language game favored by the Surrealists, he broke up the word "hemorrhage" and spoke instead of the "Age of Hemorrh"—in fact he made a painting, a bleeding, threatening, engulfing painting which he

called by that name. I think it was one of his best. I remember when he showed it to me. "You know I never talk about my work but this is something special." I think it was.

In back of Matta's place on the Palisades there was a kind of dollhouse which he used as a playroom for his two sons, and as a bedroom too when they stayed over on weekends. I mention the dollhouse because it came up one day when we were talking with Marcel Duchamp about a party for the next issue of *Instead*.

Duchamp made this suggestion: why didn't we have a masked man in the little house, and why didn't we announce to each woman who came to the party, even as she entered, that just as there were foods to be eaten and liquors to be drunk, so there was a man in a mask in the children's house to serve any purpose a woman might have? Matta was delighted with the idea and at once agreed. The only problem was where to get a man whom we could count upon to make good what we were ready to promise. Then Duchamp maliciously asked Matta, "What will you do if Patricia goes into the children's house?" I think he must have known then about her and Pierre Matisse. Matta replied, "I don't want her to." "Why not?" asked Duchamp. "Because," Matta said, "I love her and she loves me." "I think you're stupid," said Duchamp. "All you had to say was that you love her." Even to have said only that would have been to have said something false.

In all the struggles among married couples that were taking place perhaps the most unpleasant to think of then as now was the struggle between the painter Arshile Gorky and his wife, Agnes Magruder, who was called Mougouche. Here Matta was deeply involved and so I have to tell the whole story.

Gorky had been known as a painter in New York for many years; many were aware of his outstanding qualities but I think his present fame was due to his discovery by André Breton who first knew how to appreciate him, and singled him out from all the painters in New York as the one to be most admired. Also he owed something to Matta; there is no question about this. Meyer Schapiro in his introduction to Ethel Schwabacher's *Arshile Gorky* has sensitively stated what this debt was. Gorky, previous to meeting Matta, had imitated Picasso and Miró (he did not, however, have Miró's sense of humor). I remember going to a show at the Whitney at which one of Gorky's paintings covered an entire wall and talking to him about it afterward. It was an analytical piece of Cubism which Picasso might have painted himself, and it was as well painted as any Picasso. When Gorky asked me what I thought of it, I indicated that I thought it was a wonderful painting, but that it was not *his* painting. Gorky replied, "You mean it's a Picasso." "Yes," I said, "though painted by you." "Well," he said, "I think Picasso is right, so why should I paint differently?" But if

he had not begun to paint differently his would not be a famous name in painting today.

However, he did begin to paint differently, and he did this after he had met Matta. As Schapiro has indicated, when Gorky imitated Picasso or Miró he was like a son imitating a father, but when he imitated Matta he was like a brother imitating a brother. Matta could paint a Matta and Gorky could not quite paint a Gorky, but Gorky could paint a more beautiful Matta than Matta himself was able to produce—though I must say there is a certain energy in Matta, so that even his poorer paintings are not quite dead and there is a certain lack of tension in even the most beautiful paintings of Gorky. In any case, at the time I'm speaking of, Gorky had met Matta, tried to assimilate his "bursts" into a style of his own, and was making some of the wonderful paintings that thrilled André Breton, and at that point he developed cancer.

I went to see him at about that time. It was just after the war and I was on the point of getting out a French issue of Dwight Macdonald's magazine, *Politics*. I asked Gorky to contribute a drawing to it, which he did, a beautiful color drawing in a new technique he had invented but which could not be used for the review; it would have been spoiled in black and white. I went to see Gorky to return the drawing to him but he would not take it back and urged me to keep it and then he told me that he had cancer and something, just something, of his other difficulties as a result of having cancer. And then he said, but without any sentimentality or self-pity that I could notice, "Well, maybe I'm like Job."

THOUGH Gorky was to die a suicide less than a year after that conversation I had with him, he was always the painter, the almost perfect painter, in the formalist sense, and never the poet of that distress in which he and we all lived. There is a vast difference between the formalist conceptions which determined Gorky's art at its most abstract and the assertion of Matta, "There will never be a woman on my canvas, not even one with green hair." I think Matta, if the lesser artist as a painter, was on the other hand a poet of our distress, as a Surrealist indeed he had to be.

I should like to quote here from an interesting statement in Heidegger's essay, "Why Poets," which I did not read until some years after the events I am describing, but which does apply to them. It is from Heidegger I took the term "time of distress." But here are the philosopher's own words:

Long is the time of distress of this world's night. . . . In the middle of this night, the time's distress is greatest. It is then that the indigent epoch no longer even feels its indigence. . . . To be a poet in the time of distress . . . is to try to seek the traces of the gods who have fled. . . . Not

only is the sacred, insofar as it is a trace of divinity, lost, but even the traces of that lost trace are almost obliterated. . . .

Heidegger also makes the point that it is useless in such a time, and I think he implies even wrong, to use violence so as to make the sacred appear. "The spirit must blow where it lists." Now if the Surrealist movement in its criticism of "the paucity of reality" in modern life, and in its criticism, too, of conventional morality and conventional art, stimulated those artists attracted to it to be poets of the time of distress, members of the group, and André Breton particularly, often did try to start up the sacred by some act of force.

But I think the great thing about the Surrealists is that they were attuned to the distress of their time—a distress which continues into ours, and to which the American abstract artists, including Gorky, were not attuned. There is one single exception—Jackson Pollock. But this is a complicated matter, too complicated a matter for me to treat here with the fullness it deserves.

Does the representation of real distress, such as ours, involve a compact with the devil? Who perhaps asks nothing more of us than to claim to have seen God when we have not. How many have refused to make such a compact? "And I have seen what men believe they see," exulted Arthur Rimbaud in his poem "The Drunken Boat." But later, in "A Season in Hell," he conceded, "I had declared sacred the disorder of my brain."

SO MUCH for the spiritual differences between Matta and Gorky. Complicating all this was the fact that Mrs. Gorky, a bold, handsome, and engaging woman, was attracted to Matta and he to her. And then Gorky went driving with his dealer Julian Levi and other friends; there was an accident, in which no one was hurt but Gorky, but he seriously. His spinal cord was affected and his right arm partially paralyzed. He was told by the doctors who attended him that he would recover the use of his arm in time, but he did have reasons to fear that he might not, and in this state, afflicted with cancer as he was, the right arm which produced all he could be proud of useless, he was visited in the hospital by Matta and Mougouche. In this visit, under the circumstances, one may see a cruelty that is almost inexpressible.

It was late summer in 1948; I was living in Sag Harbor, Long Island. Someone called me and told me that Gorky had left the hospital he had been brought to after the accident, gone to his place in Connecticut, and hanged himself in his studio.

Beyond these facts all that I know was told me by Matta. He came from New York to see me a few days later and told me he was on his way to Maine where he was going to join Gorky's wife. He had seen Gorky, though, just before the latter's suicide. Here is how it happened.

Gorky had called him from the hospital and

asked him to meet him in Central Park. (This was 1948 and Central Park on a Sunday in those years was a very different place.) According to Matta, he had tried to dissuade Gorky from leaving his hospital bed, but could not, and so he consented to the meeting. They met in a deserted spot agreed upon over the phone. Gorky, who was quite tall, well over six feet, carried a heavy cane in his left hand and had a leather collar around his neck (which had been near-broken in the automobile accident). He said to Matta, raising the cane in his left hand, "I'm going to give you a good beating. You are very charming, but you have interfered with my family life." He raised the cane in his left hand, and holding it upright, added this: "Besides, whatever your talents, you don't understand work. Like the Soviet Union. You don't understand it." (Gorky was, during the war, pro-Russian. Once he said to me, "The Russian peasants are beating the German mechanics." And when I remarked, "Why should Stalin say anything about art when he's not interested in it?" Gorky replied, "If he were, he wouldn't be in the Kremlin, he'd be on Fifty-seventh Street." But Gorky never joined the Communist party, and I believe Matta after the war did, and that he supports the Communist position today.)

But on that Sunday in Central Park, there was Gorky threatening to chastise Matta for not understanding the Soviet Union and work. He raised the stick, and Matta ran. And Gorky ran after him. And Matta said he was afraid of only one thing, that Gorky would fall and that his head would come off. So Matta ran out of the park, and at some point Gorky stopped chasing him, got in a cab, and went to his Connecticut farm. There he hanged himself.

Anyway, Matta told me, the Surrealists had always exalted suicide, they had made heroes of the writers Jacques Vaché and René Crevel, who were suicides. They could now make a hero of Gorky, a moral hero, but in fact they were making a villain of him, Matta. He did not try to conceal his excitement and I must submit here that it did not seem to be hysterical; he admitted no guilt toward Gorky. His love for Mougouche, he said, was beyond what he had felt for any other woman, and he seemed to claim that she, in her turn, felt that way about him. The dead Gorky was a sacrifice which had made possible their present ecstasy. He was aware of what was being said of him. Breton had even called him a murderer, and hung up on him; many other former friends had cut him on the street. The American artists whom he had influenced now had a pretext for ignoring or attacking him. Pierre Matisse had made public his intention to marry Matta's wife, Patricia, who now asked Matta for a divorce. Moreover, Matisse dropped him from the painters regularly exhibited in his gallery.

So his misfortunes were mounting, but he told me with an exuberance I could not but think was

genuine that all these things mattered nothing to him compared to his feelings for Mougouche. Had he felt that way before Gorky's suicide? As a matter of fact, he had not, he said. I did not spare him, but asked: did there have to be a corpse? He did not answer this directly; his reply was that the Surrealist movement had taught sadism and even insisted on it. The question was not whether a person happened to be sadistic, but whether he had gone into sadism deeply or superficially, as if it were some discipline, like folklore, or architecture, or ancient languages. He said: didn't Breton tell us the Marquis de Sade was a greater man than Christ, and that he, Breton, who hated any reference to God, was still willing to follow Swinburne's example and call the Marquis "divine"? And he brought up the matter of the simplest Surrealist act, the emptying of a revolver into as many passersby as possible. "Could anyone who subscribed to that idea," he asked, "attack me?" Now the Surrealists subscribed to that idea and also attacked him. I must note, too, that in 1950 I read in *Combat* an apology by the Surrealist poet, René Char, for not having carried out the simplest Surrealist act; he had not fired at a single passer-

by, let alone as many as possible, and the implication was that he should have done this.

Despite his exuberance, I had to have some doubts about what was in store for Matta, and in fact, a few weeks later, he and Mougouche had broken off. Their love was as dead as the husband they had humiliated, and when I next saw him (a few months later, in Paris) he was close to a nervous breakdown. Evidently there was a difference between the support for sadism as an ideology, and a dependence on sadism in fact. Certainly he had found out something about himself he had never taken cognizance of before his great moment of exhilaration.

I must note here that in his little book on Gorky, Harold Rosenberg took what seems to me a very slanted view of the tie between the artist he favored and Matta. Rosenberg's judgment here, based, as he admitted in his text, on gossip, is arbitrary, unconvincing, and I will go as far as to say willful. Matta no more wanted to destroy Gorky than to be destroyed by him.

I THINK that the year 1948 may have marked the end of Surrealism as a movement.

Bribing Delinquents to be Good

Susan Seidner Adler

IN STRANGE contrast to the volume and heat generated by the problem of delinquent juveniles is the silence that surrounds what is actually being attempted and done to treat them. From the moment these children are picked up by social-service agencies and the courts (names withheld because of age), they effectively vanish from the public's scrutiny and attention. The child-care establishment is entrusted with them, no questions asked.

But there is a peculiar irony here; the child-care establishment considers that its primary obligation is not to the public but to the anti-social child, who must be protected from his natural enemy at whatever cost. Information therefore is not easy to come by.

Among the more effective barriers raised against public scrutiny is the language barrier, an almost impenetrable code of euphemism, a kind of plea-bargaining with words. The only thing that the jargon does reveal is the current social-science orthodoxies. National policy has been so profoundly committed over the last twenty years to keeping young miscreants out of the juvenile-justice system that the term "diversion" has been coined to summarize the massive effort, which is also sometimes referred to as "minimization of penetration" (the term "adjustment," a form of diversion, is traditionally used by the New York City courts for a discharge with a warning). This means that the label juvenile delinquent, though legally applicable to any child who commits a crime, is now only applied to the multiple hard-core offender who defies the best intentions of various probation officers, lawyers, law guardians, social workers, fact-finding hearings, investigations, reports, and judges to divert, minimize his penetration, and adjust him out of the system altogether. In short, he is what the layman would call a sociopath.

What to do with the juvenile delinquent (or sociopath) is a problem. He used to be sent to a secure institution, euphemistically (and with unintentional irony) known as a training school, but these institutions are now regarded with such distaste that most of the ones in New York State have been closed down. So instead he is generally

sent to a smaller and more congenial setting (often called a camp), for various forms of expensive therapy.

One step down the ladder of youthful miscreants is the status offender, or PINS (Person in Need of Supervision), legally defined in New York State as a child who is habitually truant, incorrigible, ungovernable, disobedient, and beyond the lawful control of parent or guardian. In practice, a PINS is what we used to call a juvenile delinquent, a child who is anti-social but not sadistic, and who is sometimes restrained by the fear of getting caught. Furthermore, since a PINS petition is often substituted for a delinquency petition, a PINS child is often a sociopath in disguise.

The final category in the child-care field covers the dependent, neglected, and abused child, sometimes lumped together under the catch-all title DN (dependent-neglected). In theory, of course, this child is completely blameless. But in practice this label is used so widely and indiscriminately as a way of not stigmatizing the delinquent child that it affords little protection to the truly dependent, neglected, and abused child.

Last is the all-purpose euphemism "emotionally disturbed," which is not properly a category, since, infinitely flexible, it can be applied across the board. It is most useful, however, as an insider's way of defining those DN's who have had brushes with the law.

All this leads to some troubling questions: first of all, since the language of the child-care agencies is intended to mislead the public that the agencies were intended to serve, to what extent are the practices of the agencies based on the same ideology? And since their effort is so overwhelmingly committed to benefiting the anti-social child that the public must be kept in the dark, to what extent is their effort itself anti-social, working against the best interest of the public at large? Secondly, and more to the point, in what sense are they benefiting the anti-social child? For at the bottom of every one of the countless controversies over how best to adjust the socially maladjusted child, is one uncontested assumption: that the socially maladjusted child can be adjusted if the proper treatment is found.

Answers to questions such as these cannot be sought in facilities openly designed for delin-

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quents, not simply because they lie at the far end of the spectrum of child-care facilities, but because it might well be argued that young sociopaths are overly resistant to change. In order to look at euphemism in action and at the same time test the effects of treatment under ideal conditions, one must go to the homes purporting to care for the emotionally disturbed, dependent, neglected, and abused, which is what I did.

II

THE homes that I visited are prettily situated in Westchester County, New York, with ample well-tended grounds and modern facilities. In appearance, they are indistinguishable from country boarding schools, but of course they differ from regular boarding schools in several important respects: the cost of one year's residence averages out to \$30,000 per child; the children are unwilling residents who do not want or understand the attention and expenditures lavished upon them and would much rather be back on the streets of the inner cities ("They do not come here loving trees," as one psychologist put it); and the children's intolerable behavior has made it necessary to isolate them from the community in a fairly restrictive setting, called a residential-treatment facility, where all their perceived needs—from therapy through education to entertainment—can be met in one place.

Child-care policy favors leaving children as close to home as possible, or, if they must be removed, placing them in foster care or community-based group homes. The residents of the homes I visited, the children in treatment there, are in treatment only because their behavior makes it impossible to place them anywhere else. Exactly how intolerable is their behavior? What in fact does disruptive mean? These were the first questions I asked. The answers, though forthcoming, were so contradictory, and slid so elusively between our common language and the special child-care code, that they were impossible to pin down, and in retrospect served as a paradigm of the condition of the professional child-care world.

"This is a home for *dependent* and *neglected* children," said the executive director of one agency on the phone. "Out of four hundred and twenty-five children we might have ten or eleven PINS, but we do not see them as offenders or delinquents but as children who may have been acting responsibly in an impossible situation."

"Sure we take muggers," he said later, in conversation. In fact, he went on, they take in many first offenders, some of whom have been classified as PINS merely to insure placement. "We only do not take someone who quite literally has brutalized someone else—left him for dead."

Again and again, as I tried to make sense of the placement process, I ran into the same difficulty. English was only spoken off the record and then

not so much to explain the sense as the senselessness of the official code. It became increasingly clear that the official jargon had a dual purpose: not only had it been designed to protect the children from the public, but to protect the agencies from the public as well. In a field that considers only a professional equipped to comprehend the subtle distinctions on which proper judgments are made, a language which conceals and obscures distinctions and judgments is a useful way of eliminating oversight and unwanted questions. An unintelligible policy is essentially safe. Of course this leads to problems. For the same confusions that serve so well to conceal policy also determine how the children are placed, whether and where they are treated, and how agencies are paid. Therefore confusions in jargon create widespread confusions in policy that they also successfully conceal.

"Labeling is part of the game," said a director of residential treatment. "My views are based on having worked with seven agencies. I've worked with teen-age gangs. I've seen kids come in who used to be called dependent-neglected; now the labels have a psychiatric emphasis. The emphasis has changed because of money, because of the funding process. An emphasis on psychiatric care will be funded. Treatment is funded; the more concentrated it is, the more it's funded. Here, look at this."

He handed me a thick sheaf of papers outlining a tentative new schedule of per-diem rates for voluntary child-care agencies put out by two acronyms: the NYSDSS and the NYSCOVCCA. What followed was a nearly perfect example of the bureaucratic mind at work. Each agency listed was accorded the letter E, I, I-E, or B.

"E means extraordinary," he explained, "or severely acting out, extremely disturbed, psychotic. I is intensive, less disturbed. E-I is a combination. B means basic, could exist in his own home with support services. E is the highest rating, the one to strive for, that gets the largest funding. The lowest, least-funded rating is B. So that's what the game is—agencies struggling to become E. It becomes a matter of defining your population. But it's very unclear. Some B's get more than I's."

The director of another agency had a different complaint about the new code. "The trouble with the I and E ratings," he said, "is that the better we do our job, the lower our ratings go. Another problem is that the state only considers an act violent if it draws blood, lands someone in the hospital. If a child throws a knife at a staff member who is wearing a thick coat, that doesn't count."

ALTHOUGH every official I talked to freely referred to acts of violence when this suited the purposes of his argument, each one backed away and resorted to code when it came down to defining his population: no, the children were definitely not delinquent, but disturbed, dependent, neglected, abused. The charac-

teristic conversation was therefore circular: why should the public be taxed for the treatment of disturbed DN's, when serious delinquents are turned out on the streets? Because the majority of our children are prone to delinquency. We have many who have been arrested—many chain snatchers and muggers and some who are prone to violence. Then isn't the labeling inaccurate and protective? We do not look at labels. Labels have only one purpose, and that is to funnel services to the needy child.

Nonetheless a few simple, illogical facts did emerge: although many young people in treatment have been arrested, this is not why they have been placed in residential facilities, since it is common knowledge that the Family Court turns all but the most serious young psychopaths out on the street (or, as one child-care official preferred to put it, most continue to be neglected). Furthermore, even young psychopaths are generally confined for shorter periods of time than the average disturbed, dependent, neglected child. Therefore, what finally determines whether or not and for how long a child is confined for treatment has nothing to do with public safety, nothing to do with whether or not he has broken the law, and if he has, nothing to do with the severity of the crime. The reason the vast majority of children are in treatment is that their behavior has become disturbing to their parents, who then for good, bad, or indifferent reasons no longer want them around. Sometimes the children's criminality makes them unmanageable, and since the courts are ineffectual, parents turn to the social services in despair. Sometimes the children are abusive because they are abused, or criminally neglected, or unable to cope with school. But since residential treatment is almost always instigated by the parent or demands his acquiescence, the placement of a disruptive child in a residential treatment facility is finally conditional upon the parent, and not upon rational public policy.

The irrationality of this system can be traced to the court's overwhelming tendency to let any young offender who is defended by his parents go free. A child who is not defended by his parents and is turned over to the social-service agencies is far more likely to be placed than one who comes before the benign arm of the juvenile law. Therefore the children in treatment facilities range all the way from mild delinquents to those who have repeatedly been discharged without a warning for criminality, but they have two things in common: one is the label disturbed DN; the other, that they lack the protection of their parents.

From the point of view of the overriding public welfare, the courts' unwillingness to confine delinquents, no matter how criminal, taken together with the social-service agencies' zeal to treat delinquents, no matter how mild, is of course absurd. But from the point of view of child-care theory the two policies are perfectly consistent: both re-

flect the entire establishment's unswerving commitment to focus on the perceived needs rather than the offenses of the delinquent child.

This commitment is accepted with astonishing rigidity as an article of faith. Without exception, those I talked with saw the children as helpless victims of deprivations: broken homes, low welfare payments, poor schooling, neglect, slum dwellings, high unemployment.

"These youngsters are so needy in so many ways. It's like me being hungry, and seeing a pot roast sitting on your kitchen counter. It's difficult for me to wait if I'm hungry, maybe even starving. The problem of delaying gratification is especially difficult for these youngsters." (A director of a residential treatment program.)

"Everything the public reads is negative. I see the need, no matter how everyone quotes them as being bad. I look at it as needs. The kids' needs are greater. By the time a kid comes in, his needs are greater." (A child-care worker.)

"Yes, they get into trouble, but they should not be blamed. The temptations for children are all there. They come to see stealing as a means of survival. It is impossible to survive on welfare." (An executive director.)

FROM this point of view delinquency is not only a result of deprivation, but delinquent behavior is itself an index of need and low self-esteem. Therefore the children's need for special remedial education is evidenced by their vast academic deficiencies, repeated truancy, and disruptive behavior in school. The cure is obvious: each school is specially designed to cater to these children's special needs.

"I think the schooling is for the most part fantastic, unique—in spite of problems. We have a small ratio of children to teachers and good audiovisual aids, including closed-circuit TV. Volunteers come in and work with specialists. . . . If a child does not grow after six months, we can take a volunteer—we have over five hundred—and outline a program for that kid. . . . Once you understand the deficits these kids have, if someone says you're spending too much money, that's understandable, but not helping the problem." (A director of psychological services and research.)

Another need is the need for clothing. It is issued to children twice a year, at an allocated clothing allowance (for 1980) of \$563 a year for girls between the ages of twelve and fifteen, and \$424 for boys, while girls aged sixteen and over merit \$724, and boys, \$465. And then, as one child told me, "Most kids get clothing from home. They don't give clothes like we like them."

The children's need for recreation and entertainment is met by a modern gymnasium, a football field or stadium, often a swimming pool, and in one home I visited, the children had their own television station; regularly scheduled games, contests, parties, tournaments, movies, trips, dinners

out; and special excursions to major sports events, Broadway theaters, expensive restaurants, and entertainment parks.

What does the staff conceive of as its biggest problem? The answers were surprisingly consistent: the tendency of inexperienced child-care workers, or the public, or the children themselves to view their behavior in a moral context of blame. One director of treatment neatly covered all points: "Staff attitudes too often reflect the outside world and are blaming, rather than supportive. We do not view this as incarceration, even with disruptive children, but it is difficult to make them see the place is not a punishment. They come thinking it is, with a negative attitude."

SINCE the children are not guilty, but needy, and their enforced stay is not supposed to be a negative, but a positive, experience, the various treatment methods come down to various ways of offering rewards. On the simplest level, as one supervising psychologist put it: "Anything not negative is useful. It really comes down to effective parenting. The best techniques are the most obvious ones—using praise rather than blame, emphasizing good qualities rather than bad." But the techniques used are not always that obvious. For under such terms as behavioral-modification programs, incentive systems, or positive reinforcement, are programs offering privileges for simply decent behavior that few parents of exemplary children could afford.

"A special event, like the Knicks game, is a reward for a child who came in first in the unit for some specific behavior he was working on—for not cursing, for example. Other behavior is not considered in the rating. Tonight the first-placers are going for dinner at Mamma Leone's. I'm taking the second-placers to the Knicks game. There was \$5 a child left over, so the third-placers are going to McDonald's—that was done as a surprise. It's good for them. The staff volunteers to take them in vans, usually to things we want to go to ourselves." (A child-care worker.)

"Say the problem has to do with self-image—and it usually does—we may decide the best thing would be to send a teen-age girl to a beauty parlor. Quite a few have gone. It is paid for by the agency, though an older child can sometimes kick in something. These children come in with little or no self-respect; the most important thing is to give them some sense of worth." (Assistant to executive director.)

Moreover, if a child does what is expected of him, he generally earns tokens or points which can be exchanged for money or special liberties.

Since the number of needy children who are not institutionalized is vastly greater than the number of those in institutions, why should the most unmanageable be treated to extra help and privileges?

Because disruptive children are more disadvan-

taged than well-behaved disadvantaged children, said one official. All the others thought it unfortunate that the disruptive child was favored, but they had a solution: society should provide privileges to all children, even those who behave themselves.

AND how do the favored few respond to the favors they are shown?

Of course they continue to act out, was the unvarying reply, but acting out is therapeutic for these children. We consider it a necessary part of their recovery. The difficulty came when I tried to find out what was meant by "acting out."

"Acting out can take many forms," said one official as if in answer to my question. "Often they can do it subtly."

"What are the more overt kinds of behavior problems, then?"

"Overt kinds are a problem."

"Is stealing a problem?"

"Stealing can happen, but the children see it not so much as stealing but borrowing. A child returning from the station might say, 'My shoelaces broke and I had to borrow a bike.' Of course, if it is discovered that they are taking things to sell, or taking them apart to sell pieces, the punishment is more severe."

The punishment was characteristic: "We don't contact the police. First of all we make the child go back and return the object to the owner, or we see that he replaces it. Each decision is based on the individual. Sometimes an immediate punishment is the only kind that can be understood. Then maybe a child won't be allowed to go on a special trip or see a movie."

Another official handled the same question this way: "The most serious infractions are when the kids run off campus. I am worried they may get hurt trying to slip on a train."

"Come," I said, "you can't call that serious."

"Well, there are sometimes problems with our neighbors. They sometimes complain about the stealing of minor items."

"Minor items?"

"Bicycles, radios, TV's. The kids walk from the station. Sometimes they fool around, steal. I'm worried that someday a kid may get really hurt if he is caught by a homeowner—some homeowner who may have had something stolen before."

And the punishment? "If a kid is caught stealing, first we return the item—replace it if it is destroyed. Then," he chuckled, "we calm the irate homeowner. If it is a small item, like a bicycle, we do not notify the police. We decide what kind of punishment is appropriate. Perhaps the loss of privileges, or other restrictions, usually lasting for four weeks. For instance, not being allowed to go on a special trip, say to Madison Square Garden, if the kid really wants to go. There are different grades of restrictions. The most severe would mean being restricted to the cottage, with no gym."

Less severe would mean being restricted on campus. If, say, there are forty different instances, then a kid would be restricted to his cottage. In that case a support system [psychiatrists] would be called in. The staff will have to decide if being restricted will make him a hero. If so, we may decide to release the child. Our approach is flexible. If, in the judgment of the staff, a trip has therapeutic value for that particular child, he will be released. We deal with the stealing of minor items as in a family situation."

It is impossible to reconcile the extraordinary complexity of the agencies' rehabilitative approaches with the matter-of-fact simplicity of their approach to stealing in their midst. "Kids have a problem with why they should obey the law," explained one worker. "Their attitude is: you have, why shouldn't I take from you? It's not a problem if you don't have much, try not to antagonize a child to do it, don't let a kid know you have lots of money, don't wear expensive jewelry." Her attitude was echoed and reechoed by other staff members. "If you put your purse down, or a necklace down, they'd steal it," said one director. "They steal from each other and the staff if anything is left around. Here, the staff stops trouble. Outside—if, say, they were making trouble on the street—I would walk around them myself."

In view of the staff's obvious tolerance for the behavior that they were going to such staggering lengths to change, it was not surprising that no one wanted to tell me how successful treatment is.

"It all depends on what you mean by success," said one official in a prickly tone of voice. "Do you mean that they are alive—haven't gotten themselves killed? Do you mean that they get married, have a job, lead a middle-class life, go to college?" She eyed me with hostility.

"I mean do they break the law?"

"Sure, some do break the law." She was now openly angry. "The question should be, how do they break the law—how do they handle the offense? Do they break it once, and not again? How do they view being in jail?"

To my astonishment, although the criteria for measuring success were varied, including going back to school, ability to function, improvement, not one official considered or included abiding by the law.

III

WITHOUT exception, the child-care professionals I talked with were humane. A genuine sense of service had drawn them to a field that offered untold frustrations and difficulties in exchange for few tangible—and even fewer intangible—rewards. Only men and women of unusual dedication would be willing to put up with work that was always demanding, sometimes demeaning, at times even dangerous, but that accomplished essentially nothing. And that seemed to be the problem: they were too will-

ing to work hard for little or no return. Armed with patience, good will, and infinite tolerance, they seemed as full of purpose as conscientious objectors called to war, and in spite of their endless preoccupation with battle plans, they seemed not to know who the enemy was, or what the cause.

Both seemed clear enough to me: residential-treatment centers had been designed to transmit middle-class values to children whose behavior so directly violated middle-class standards that they were unacceptable anywhere else. Their purpose therefore was twofold: in inculcating these children with accepted values, they would not only be protecting society, but enabling the children to lead productive, instead of destructive, lives. Obvious. And yet it became equally obvious that the agencies were not committed to the values that they had been designed to transmit. Instead of the zeal of missionaries, they had the detachment of anthropologists. In fact they had no values, only virtues; and being virtuous, they showed endless good will, tolerance, and patience with what they would call inappropriate behavior or acting out, but what I would call wrongdoing or criminality. Throwing a temper tantrum is different from throwing a knife. Stealing is not an inability to delay gratification. Aggressive acts are not intrapersonal conflicts. And the jargon notwithstanding, distinctions are important.

Since it is their task to impart moral values, and since they are unwilling to make moral distinctions, the agencies do not know what their objectives are. Whenever I asked what the purpose of treatment was, I heard the same stock reply: a little respite, a little breathing space, a neutral setting. Hardly fighting words. In fact they suggest time out, not change; recuperation, not rehabilitation; a passive period of recovery, not an active period of effort. And in spite of the agencies' indignation at the charge that they are only warehousing children, their stated objectives do little to refute the charge.

A child's behavior is an accurate measure of the success of any program aimed at his rehabilitation. If he no longer gets into trouble, it is a success; if he does, it is a failure. Yet since it is impossible to define, let alone gauge, what is a successful recovery from delinquency (as opposed to rehabilitation; "recovery" is non-specific and finds its meaning in the eyes of the beholder), the agencies are free to define success in any way they please. Do they consider treatment successful if they occasionally turn a violent mugger into a mugger who stops short of brutalizing his victim? The answer was unanimous: sure, sure. It is not an answer that would satisfy most people.

Furthermore, the agencies could not define the nature of the problem that they were expected to solve any more than they could define their objectives, or success. Since the response to a problem is largely determined by how it is defined—one cor-

rects wrongdoing; one treats acting out—and since the agencies have defined their populations incorrectly, it is more than likely that the agencies have been treating them incorrectly as well. Like it or not, the whole treatment approach was designed for the emotionally troubled, dependent-neglected children that they had once had, and not for the anti-social children who now made up the majority of their population. Since they were unwilling or unable to change their approach, it was in their own interest to define all their residents as dependent-neglecteds, and to define all forms of anti-social behavior as emotional disorders. But such an act of definition does not make of the definition a fact, and it does not follow that anti-social behavior is indeed an emotional illness, or that it can be treated with therapy.

Far from being a sickness, anti-social behavior has definite advantages for lower-class children in terms of the values that define their own way of life. It is not inappropriate, unacceptable, and it is not even anti-social—it is simply anti-middle class, anti-white, and most often, anti-both. There is no reason to assume that because these children do not accept middle-class values, they do not understand them, any more than there is reason to assume that they do not know when they are breaking the law. But since it is undemocratic to think in terms of class, not nice to think in terms of race, and backward to think in terms of right and wrong, the agencies prefer to treat lower-class values as though they are a sickness, thereby betraying small-minded biases, patronizing the children, and wasting everyone's money and time. For the problem is not that children who are defiant are sick, do not understand commonly held standards of right and wrong, or do not know when they are breaking the law. The problem is that they do not want middle-class approval because middle-class values are, almost by definition, in conflict with their own. They may well take a certain pride in being delinquent. In a sense this is war. Unlike their therapists, they are not conscientious objectors. They know exactly where their own loyalties lie. And since most of the time they have learned they can get away with it, they have little to lose.

THEY certainly have little to fear, since the juvenile courts, as well as the agencies, tend to focus on the needs rather than the offenses of the child and view treatment, rather than punishment, as the best way of insuring his eventual rehabilitation. But it is not clear that treatment rather than punishment always works in the best interest of the child or that there are more benefits than dangers in the Family Court's overall tendency to function as a social, instead of a law-enforcement, agency. There may well be more dangers. For example, it is common knowledge that as a result of the remedial approach delinquents are often confined longer than hard-core or repeat offenders, and "hard-to-place"

youth often slip through the system altogether. ("If we took those kids, we'd be sacrificing other services," as one director put it.) Furthermore, because any act of wrongdoing is viewed in the context of a complex set of relationships (set forth in various psychiatric, fact-finding, and clinical reports), the parents are often held responsible, instead of the child and actual wrongdoer. Perhaps most importantly, in the process of treating a child and overlooking the illegality of an act he has committed, the court may well be confusing the child's own latent sense of justice, for knowing that he has broken the law, he is more likely to expect, accept, and understand punishment than treatment.

In short, not only does the treatment mentality further undermine a delinquent child's sense of responsibility for his actions, but it further undermines his respect for the law, thereby undermining what are obviously the two basic aims of rehabilitation. In spite of its humanitarian intent, the court may, by attempting to protect the child, in fact be strengthening his weaknesses.

But there are other consequences. Since the agencies are determined to overlook the guilt of the anti-social child, instead of looking to the environment for an explanation, they must look to it for an excuse; the delinquent child is disturbed because he is deprived. This was a theme I heard endlessly repeated, with numerous variations, an apparently conventional line of non-reasoning that might be considered arrogant, base, or just plain silly, if it were not so obviously contrived. For if children are disturbed because they are deprived, it follows that the accoutrements of middle-class life do not merely provide us with our comfort, but with our sanity. But what is more to the point than this obvious nonsense: only a small minority of children growing up in the slums are unable to keep their undelayed gratifications at an acceptable level. As the agencies themselves admitted, the vast majority of slum children behave themselves and do not break the law, although they and their parents are victims of the same system. Some of them even grow up to be responsible officials of juvenile agencies.

It is also worth mentioning that unlike many children in the world who are literally starving, our delinquents are suffering more from greed than from actual hunger. And considering the vast numbers of children who do not steal—although in comparison to their deprivation, welfare conditions must seem beyond the wildest dreams of avarice—the agencies' view of delinquency is not only ridiculous, but offensive.

Then, too, if deprivation is to be taken in the broader sense (deprived of the ideal two-parent home; deprived of love), nonsense is only compounded by nonsense, but the same arguments hold. By those utopian standards, only a few, lucky children count themselves not deprived.

Nonetheless, since it is unmet needs, depriva-

tions, and so-called disadvantages that justify the treatment approach, the agencies choose to overlook the many advantages that delinquents have, know they have, and see no reason to lose. Therefore, while I continually heard about the harmful effect of life on the streets, no one mentioned its lures, thrills, and adventures, or the positive side of delinquency and neglect: easy money, easy sex, and the freedom to do as you please. In fact, in many, if not most, respects, the life of a typical black, lower-class delinquent is an adolescent dream (not surprisingly, the vast majority of runaways are white). Morality aside, few teen-agers, black or white, would not take undelayed gratifications over a neat room and three well-balanced meals. If we stick strictly to the language of the agencies—the language of advantages and disadvantages—the advantages are all on one side: it is the well-behaved middle-class teen-ager who is clearly deprived.

This may be so simple that only a child can understand it.

THE agencies' thinking is confused all along the line. If delinquency is a sickness caused by deprivation, it follows that expensive privileges are the proper medicine for the disease. Or, to put it in the language of the field—disadvantaged children need advantages. Which leads to the next confusion: the agencies never doubt that they know what advantages mean. For example, they offer education as something that will profit young delinquents, even though its benefits derive from the class and cultural values that they do not defend and the children do not understand. Yet education in fact offers nothing but disadvantages to children whose idea of success is more likely to be easy money than hard-won achievement, beating the system than working within it. The same holds true for the small amount of vocational training or job-related skills that the agencies offer. A child who knows he can steal a gold chain in a few seconds sees no need to work long hours at a menial job for what he must consider small change. Furthermore, because it is the avowed purpose of treatment to work in the best interest of the child, not to transmit values, the child cannot be faulted for knowing where his self-interest truly lies. In their well-intentioned determination to overlook guilt and focus on needs, the agencies are in fact defining and judging behavior in terms similar to those of the most sociopathic of their children, and only confusing those who have some sense of right and wrong.

For although the title of each of the countless treatment programs is awful in its own unique way, the programs all carry the same cynical message to the child: we know it is fun and goods you are after, and all you need do to have plenty of both is temporarily not misbehave. When the only penalty for an act as serious as stealing is to have an expensive entertainment or privilege taken

away, one cannot help but wonder about the exact nature of the incentives built into the so-called incentive system. It seems quite clear that by attempting to manipulate the children's behavior with what they so proudly call positive reinforcement—bribing children to be good—the agencies are only encouraging their delinquents to be more manipulative; and being manipulated in turn. Both sides are in fact manipulating each other for their own purposes—as one candid official suggested, manipulation is the name of the game.

It has been a game with many losers—the language, the public, and the laws—but perhaps the most obvious losers are the few truly disturbed, neglected, and abandoned children who are still placed through no fault of their own. Not only are they the only ones undeservedly stigmatized by treatment, but since they are bound to be either swayed or victimized by the majority, they are the only ones to be harmed—instead of simply not helped.

IV

AS PASCAL said, the first moral obligation is to think clearly. Let us start.

Delinquent children are not guilty of anything except socially intolerable behavior. They cannot be held accountable for their race, class, families, or dispositions. Neither can they be held accountable to anyone but their parents for how they choose to think, eat, play, study, delay or not delay their gratifications, or for what their ambitions (or lack of them) are. They owe society one thing and one thing only—tolerable behavior. If their behavior is intolerable, society has the right to correct their behavior (but not them) to the full extent of the law. Society has no right to infer what is in their best interest. Society has a simple obligation to look after its own.

Also self-evident: the only reason that delinquent children come to the attention of the courts or the social agencies is that their behavior is not in the best interest of society. They are not picked up because their behavior is not in their own best interest. It follows that it is in the best interest of society to rehabilitate delinquent children; it does not follow that rehabilitation is in the best interest of the children themselves. Obviously, therefore, by the child's best interest, the court means society's best interest and not the child's.

This being so, it is the court's proper function to enforce the law in the best interest of society. It is not the court's proper function to waive the law (and the best interest of society) in the supposed best interest of the anti-social child.

By putting the best interest of the anti-social child above the best interest of society, the agencies are transmitting precisely the wrong lessons, appealing to the worst instincts of their delinquent populations, and furthering socially destructive ends.

Beyond Nuremberg

Allan Gerson

ON January 21, 1981, the Supreme Court, in one of its most extraordinary opinions, decided the case of *United States of America v. Feodor Federenko*. At issue was whether the defendant, a seventy-four-year-old Ukrainian-American who during World War II had served as an armed guard at the infamous Treblinka extermination camp, should have his American citizenship revoked on the basis of this newly discovered fact about his past.

The majority opinion, delivered by Justice Marshall and joined in by Justices Brennan, Stewart, Powell, and Rehnquist, ruled that Federenko's Nazi past automatically excluded him from entry into the United States and hence from any lawful acquisition of American citizenship thereafter. Justice Burger concurred in the judgment without filing a separate opinion explaining his reluctance to join in the majority. Justice Blackmun also concurred; his reservations over the majority's opinion, he stated, were based on their failure to disavow expressly the Court of Appeals ruling which would permit revocation of citizenship on mere proof that an individual had misrepresented a fact on his petition for immigration or naturalization if disclosure of that fact might have led to denial of the petition. Justice White dissented, maintaining that the case ought to be remanded to the Court of Appeals for clarification of the appropriate legal standard involved. Finally, Justice Stevens, in what was by far the most provocative and disturbing opinion, castigated the majority for deciding the case "on a theory that no litigant argued, that the government expressly disavowed, and that may jeopardize the citizenship of countless survivors of Nazi concentration camps."

What most aroused the ire of Justice Stevens was that the Court, in rejecting as irrelevant Federenko's defense that his behavior had been "involuntary," was destroying the essential distinction between Federenko's conduct and that of kapos and other prisoners at Treblinka who, in one way or another, assisted the Nazis in the processes of extermination. As Stevens viewed it, the statutory

provision at the heart of the case against Federenko—Section 2(a) of the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, which forbade entry by persons who "assisted the enemy in persecuting civil populations" during World War II—had to be construed as barring entry only of persons who *voluntarily* assisted the enemy. Any other construction would have had the effect of excluding Jewish prisoners who had assisted the SS in the operation of the camps, a result clearly contrary to the intent of Congress. In the Federenko case the Court resolved this dilemma by holding that:

The solution to the problem [of jeopardizing the citizenship of Jewish survivors of extermination camps] . . . lies, not in "interpreting" the Act to include a voluntariness requirement that the statute itself does not impose, but in focusing on whether particular conduct can be considered assisting in the *persecution* of civilians. Thus, an individual who did no more than cut the hair of female inmates before they were executed cannot be found to have assisted in the persecution of civilians. On the other hand, there can be no question that a guard who was issued a uniform and armed with a rifle and pistol, who was paid a stipend and regularly allowed to leave the concentration camp to visit a nearby village, and who admitted to shooting at escaping inmates on orders from the commandant of the camp, fits within the statutory language about persons who assisted in the persecution of civilians. Other cases may present more difficult line-drawing problems but we need decide only this case.

But this solution was hardly acceptable to Stevens, who reasoned:

Thus the Court would give the word "persecution" some not yet defined specially limited reading. In my opinion, the term "persecution" clearly applies to such conduct [as cutting hair, etc.]; indeed it probably encompasses almost every aspect of life or death in a concentration camp.

It is remarkable in itself that a Supreme Court opinion dealing with distinctions in culpability between Nazi death-camp guards and prisoner collaborators should have been rendered in 1981, nearly forty years after the events in question. What is perhaps equally remarkable is that so lit-

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the public attention, either in the daily or periodical press, has been focused on this unusual decision which addresses itself to individual responsibility under the most trying of circumstances. Indeed in many ways the decision can be viewed as going beyond the holdings of the Nuremberg and Eichmann proceedings, where what was involved was obedience to "superior orders" or distinguishing between right and wrong in a society said to have gone "morally insane." Here, the issue was whether the law can exact potentially suicidal standards of conduct on the part of those confronted with participation in the processes of destruction of human life.

I

LET us begin with the man at the center of the dispute. Federenko arrived in the United States in late 1949, penniless and without family, carrying the visa issued to him by U.S. consular authorities under the terms of the Displaced Persons Act. He settled in Waterbury, Connecticut, obtained employment there as a furnace operator for the Scovill Metal Works, and led a quiet, uneventful life until his retirement in 1973. At about that time he learned that his wife and son, who he presumed had perished during the war, were still alive and residing within the Soviet Union. This prompted him to take three trips to the Soviet Union: in 1973 for two weeks; in 1974 for three weeks; and in 1975-1976 for fifty-one weeks. During his second trip, his past at Treblinka came to the attention of Soviet authorities and they detained and questioned him at length about his service. (Later, at his trial in the United States, Federenko was to claim that witnesses had exonerated him of any wrongdoing and he invited the court to travel to the Soviet Union for the purpose of hearing such testimony. Nothing came of the proposal.)

In 1976, upon returning from his latest trip abroad, Federenko decided to move from Connecticut to Miami Beach, Florida. He hardly had time to unpack before he was visited by agents of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. They had learned from information published in a pro-Soviet Ukrainian weekly in New York that Federenko had been a guard at Treblinka. Federenko did not deny the charge. He admitted, moreover, that he had purposely concealed and misrepresented this fact upon his application for a visa to the United States in 1949. That was all the United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida needed to know; within a few months, denaturalization proceedings were filed against Federenko. The charge: his naturalization had been procured unlawfully and through misrepresentation or concealment of material facts in violation of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.

At the trial, which commenced in the United

States District Court for the Southern District of Florida in the summer of 1977, only the facts about Federenko's pre-war life and the events leading up to his capture as a prisoner of war in June 1941 went uncontested. He had been a truck-driver in a provincial Ukrainian town until mobilized into the Soviet Army immediately upon the German invasion. Within two weeks he was captured and interned at the large German POW camp at Chelm, Poland. Of 80,000 prisoners, half died of starvation during the winter of 1941-42. Federenko claimed he survived on a diet of grass roots.

In March 1942 the German SS undertook a search at the camp for men to be trained as concentration-camp guards or as auxiliary police to be used in the liquidation of the ghettos of Eastern Europe and the quelling of any uprisings. Federenko claimed that he was "selected" for such training, and that he had no choice since refusal would have meant risking a bullet for his impudence, or starvation at Chelm.

The government sought to refute this version of the facts, and to show that Federenko volunteered for training as a guard. But its evidence—the testimony of a U.S. consular official based on third-hand sources—was too weak to meet the high burden of "clear, unequivocal, and convincing" evidence imposed upon the government in denaturalization proceedings.

The government also failed in its next task. Federenko maintained that after undergoing training at the SS's Travnicki camp he did a short stint at the Lublin ghetto, and then was transferred to Treblinka in April 1942. While at Treblinka he did control-tower duty at Camp No. 1 where the working prisoners were housed and only on rare occasions entered Camp No. 2, where the gas chambers, crematoria, and open pits, which consumed the lives of over 500,000 human beings during Federenko's stay at Treblinka, were located. He claimed that while at Treblinka, from April 1942 to August 1943, he never beat, shot, or killed a single Jewish prisoner, with the sole exception of the morning of August 2, 1943 when several hundred bedraggled prisoners staged a revolt and managed to stream through the front gates into the surrounding forests. On that occasion he shot at the prisoners but he could not know whether he had in fact killed anyone.

In attempting to refute this version of Federenko's duties the government introduced the testimony of six survivors of the Treblinka revolt, all currently residents of Israel, who testified that Federenko regularly beat the arriving Jews, helped prod them into the gas chambers, and executed them in front of the large burning pits. He was identified on the basis of his 1949 visa photograph which was placed in a spread of about 20 different photographs. This display the trial court deemed "suggestive" in its placement of the Federenko photograph; it pronounced that the identification

of the defendant, and hence all the testimony concerning him, was less than credible.

The only issue then before the court was whether Federenko's admitted guard service and admitted firing at escaping prisoners was, in itself, sufficient evidence to warrant issuance of an order of denaturalization. To resolve this issue the core question became whether Federenko's entry visa had been fraudulently procured; if so, he would not have established five years of legal residence in the United States—the precondition for lawful acquisition of American citizenship. Federenko claimed that his one misrepresentation—he had put down on his visa application that he had been a farmer at Sarny, Poland when in fact he had been a guard at Treblinka—did not constitute a "material" misrepresentation within the meaning of the United States Code. This, he argued, was because his service at Treblinka had been "involuntary" and hence, if disclosed, would not have resulted in his exclusion from entry into the United States.

The trial court first took notice of the fact that the Displaced Persons Act under which Federenko was admitted drew no distinction between those who had assisted the Nazis voluntarily in the persecution of civilians and those who had done so involuntarily. But this presented a problem, for if "any assistance, whether voluntary or involuntary, in connection with concentration-camp treatment of civilian population would be sufficient to bar that person . . . it would bar every Jewish prisoner who survived Treblinka because each one of them assisted the SS in the operation of the camp." Since it would be "absurd" to deem such conduct "assistance" inasmuch as it was involuntary, and took place under the utmost duress, the court felt compelled to read the word "voluntarily" into the act.

Having laid the groundwork, the trial court then addressed the next issue—whether Federenko's conduct was indeed involuntary, as he claimed. We have already seen that the court found no conclusive evidence to support a finding that Federenko had volunteered for training as a camp guard. It then tried to determine whether the fact that Federenko may have had opportunities to escape from Treblinka rendered his service voluntary in nature. The court took note of the amazing statistic that the entire extermination operation at Treblinka, an average of 2,000 killings daily, was manned by only about 25 German SS, 15-20 ethnic Germans from occupied areas involved largely in administrative tasks, and 200 armed Ukrainian guards. The guards had weekly 4-hour furloughs to the neighboring town and some took advantage of this chance to escape. Of those who tried, several succeeded; among those less lucky some would always be shot as object lessons to the others.

Under these circumstances, the trial judge pronounced, he could not, "seated in a comfortable

chair in an air-conditioned office," rule that Federenko had been under a legal duty to risk his life by attempting escape. Nor, ruled the judge, could Federenko be expected to have refused orders to fire at escaping Jews; had he done so, "there is little doubt from the evidence that his execution would have been swift and sure." To which the judge added the following postscript:

For a prisoner-guard at Treblinka to have denounced publicly the SS and what they were doing there would indeed have been a dramatic act of decency. It also would have been a dramatic act of self-destruction. As a court of equity, this court cannot impose such a duty upon defendant.

On the basis of this chain of reasoning, the trial court dismissed the case against Federenko.

II

As might be expected, the trial court's decision aroused strong feelings. Representative Joshua Eilberg, then chairman of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and International Law, received an angry letter from the chief of the Nazi war-crimes section of the Israeli police who called the decision a "macabre joke." Eilberg himself protested the decision in a letter to the Attorney General. Untouched by the swirling storm of controversy, the attorney at the Solicitor General's office who was reviewing the case for purposes of a possible appeal noted, "The fact is that we do not know today for sure if Federenko is a war criminal or not."

Before the Solicitor General could decide whether or not to proceed with an appeal, further protests were lodged by Martin Mendelsohn, chief of the newly constituted special-litigation unit within the Immigration and Naturalization Service, established for the express purpose of reviewing over 200 files on alleged Nazi collaborators residing in the United States. Mendelsohn wrote: "As an admitted guard at the notorious Treblinka, there can be little question, as the witnesses testified, that [Federenko] was engaged in crimes against humanity. There were no neutrals at a death camp." The decision was made to appeal the trial court's judgment.

On the road to appeal, however, a curious thing happened. The case was transformed from one whose primary emphasis was on crimes against humanity, albeit within the context of a fraud proceeding, to one hanging on the issue of fraud, with the matter of war crimes on the periphery. Two supporting briefs filed on behalf of major Jewish organizations did speak of the need to rectify the failure "to bring to justice those guilty of the enormities of the Holocaust" and "to understand the nature of the crime committed." But the Justice Department's approach was vastly dif-

ferent, as can be seen in the following exchange between the appellate bench and counsel for the government:

The Court: What's the basis of the prosecution of this man? Is it to establish that the things he did were so reprehensible that they must be—that action must be taken today? Or, is it—are we going to make some law that is going to be useful to the United States in further proceedings of denaturalization? . . . Is this [case here] because of the death camp service and because of the relation to the Holocaust, or is it about citizenship?

The Government: It's about citizenship.

To prove the point, the United States fashioned its argument around a 1960 Supreme Court decision, *Chaunt v. United States*, which concerned the definition of material misrepresentation in the context of an application for citizenship. The government contended that under *Chaunt* it was sufficient that truthful disclosure would have triggered an investigation that *might* have changed the outcome. In this argument it became irrelevant whether Federenko's service was "voluntary" or not, or whether indeed it truly constituted the type of assistance to the enemy with which Article 2 of the Displaced Persons Act was concerned. The issue was no longer guilt for collaboration with the Nazis, but guilt for being less than entirely candid, or careful—as the case may be—in filling out one's visa application some three decades ago.

On June 28, 1979, at about the same time that Mendelsohn's special litigation unit was being disbanded to make way for a much larger "anti-Nazi" unit within the criminal division of the Justice Department, the Court of Appeals rendered its verdict. The judgment of the trial court was reversed and Federenko was ordered denaturalized on the grounds that, applying *Chaunt v. United States*, "it is not necessary that the government prove the existence of facts which, in and of themselves, would have justified denial of citizenship." The defendant appealed the decision to the Supreme Court.

III

USUALLY it is the Solicitor General who argues on behalf of the government before the Supreme Court, but either at the Justice Department or at the White House the Federenko case was considered sufficiently important to warrant argument by the Attorney General himself. This was to be Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti's first and sole appearance before the Court.

His argument was strangely empty of any substantive references to Federenko's role, and that of others like him, in the perpetration of the Nazi Final Solution. He made clear at the outset that

his concern was with current and future illegal immigration into the United States—illegal Mexican aliens, not Nazis—and that a stringent standard of fraudulent misrepresentation was necessary to deter abuse of the immigration laws.

The Justices showed immediate concern. Was not the standard Civiletti was urging, as adopted by the Court of Appeals, unduly punitive? The following question seemed to sum up their apprehension:

Supposing for example at the time he applied for a visa they were only issuing visas to college graduates or married persons or something like that, and he concealed his marital status and his educational status, and therefore, got a visa; then came over and lived here for 20 or 30 years, and then filed the same kind of application for naturalization as he did here. Would the government be entitled to denaturalize that person?

Civiletti's answer was unequivocal: "We can reach back and denaturalize him for that fraud."

Fortunately, the Supreme Court did not agree. It refused to endorse the broad definition of material misrepresentation urged upon it by the government. It ruled that it was unnecessary to rely on an interpretation of *Chaunt* because, in the particular circumstances of this case, it was clear that disclosure by Federenko of his Treblinka service would have mandated his exclusion.

While not expressly overruling the broad interpretation of *Chaunt*, the Court's judgment seemed, as Justice Blackmun put it in his concurring opinion, "to reject this approach." In Justice Blackmun's view:

If naturalization can be revoked years or decades after it is conferred, on the mere suspicion that certain undisclosed facts *might* have warranted exclusion, I fear that the valued rights of citizenship are in danger of erosion.

IV

THIS then brings us to the crux of the case, at least as far as the Jewish question is concerned. As indicated earlier, the Supreme Court ruled that the trial court erred in reading the term "voluntarily" into the Displaced Persons Act's exclusion of persons who "assisted the enemy in persecuting civilian populations." What then of the fear expressed by the trial court, and echoed by Justice Stevens in his dissent, that to read the statute as also excluding those who assisted involuntarily would jeopardize the American citizenship of all Jewish survivors of extermination camps? The trial court pointed out:

Every Jewish prisoner who survived Treblinka . . . assisted the SS in the operation of the camp. Each did so involuntarily and under the utmost duress. For example, working prisoners led arriving prisoners to the lazaret to be executed; or

wore armbands as part of the ruse at the lazaret; or cut the hair of the females to be executed; others played in the orchestra at the gate as part of that ruse, etc. Technically, this is assistance.

The Supreme Court attempted to get around the difficulties presented by the word "assistance" by concentrating instead on the word "persecution." If a person had been guilty of persecution, his citizenship would be in jeopardy. What "persecution" meant within the context of the Displaced Persons Act, was left unresolved by the Court. Clearly, the Court ruled, it did not encompass the activities of prisoners who did no more than cut the hair of female inmates before they were executed. Other cases, the Court allowed, "may present more difficult line-drawing problems."

Thus the Supreme Court left open the possibility that, at least in theory, Jewish survivors of extermination camps who did more than simply cut the hair of female inmates before execution (coaxed arrivals into the gas chambers under the pretext that they were showers? beat or selected Jews for execution, in the role of kapos?) could have their citizenship revoked for participation, even though under extreme duress, in the crimes of the Holocaust. In essence, then, the Supreme Court appeared to be implying that just as Federenko's defense of involuntary behavior, in the sense that he had no options which were not potentially or in fact suicidal, could not excuse his participation in the operation of an extermination camp, so it would not excuse assistance on the part of Jewish death-camp survivors.

The point was hardly novel in the annals of jurisprudence, but it had yet to be made in the context of a denaturalization proceeding. And although perhaps academic—it being highly unlikely that the Justice Department would bring proceedings against death-camp survivors—it raised questions about Jewish responsibility during the Holocaust which few had raised before.

The principle that duress, while excusing participation in lesser crimes, does not pardon participation in the destruction of human life is well enshrined in Anglo-American criminal law. Few law students fail to read such cases as *United States v. Holmes* which hold that if passengers or sailors must be thrown into the sea in order to save other members of the group, the terrible choice should be made by casting lots. Similarly, if, in order to save his life, one of two shipwrecked persons swimming in the sea supported by a plank thrusts the other off, he is guilty of murder or manslaughter; and this is true even if the other person was sickly and doomed to die soon anyway. The Talmud draws the same conclusion: it rejects the plea of necessity as an excuse

for taking life. If a man is threatened with death unless he kills another, the Talmud provides (Sanhedrin 74a): "Let him rather kill you, but you may not kill the other man. Who can say that your blood is redder than his?"*

Needless to say, "line-drawing," as the Supreme Court put it, is no easy task when what is at stake is a person's culpability for not making the ultimate sacrifice rather than participate in "persecution." Federenko's case was easy. There can be no doubt that service as an armed guard, whose very function was to insure that massive extermination proceeded smoothly and without hitch, was active collaboration in murder. But what of the Jews? It is painful even to contemplate asking those who survived, in circumstances where all conventions of normal life disappeared, whether survival was worth the price some had to pay. It is disconcerting that this awful question should have been raised in the trial of one who was on the side of the murderers rather than of the murdered.

But there was little recourse for the Supreme Court. To have accepted Justice Stevens's point of view would have meant dismissing the case against Federenko on the ground that the government had failed to demonstrate that his conduct was "voluntary," and this would have meant condoning savagery. Perhaps a distinction could have been drawn between the obligation of a soldier, which Federenko had been, and civilian prisoners. But the Court chose not to do so, perhaps mindful of the lesson of the shipwreck cases that no one may preserve his own life through taking another's.

QUESTIONS about moral, and indeed even legal, responsibility in the face of forces of massive evil continue to plague those concerned with the legacy of the Holocaust. The Supreme Court's decision in *Federenko* provides no answer to these questions. But it does, ironically enough, provide a moral attitude. And it is, as Justice Stevens pointed out, one never considered in the proceedings. Had the trial court's judgment gone unchallenged, as was nearly the case, guard duty at Treblinka would have been condoned as an "involuntary" act. Had the Court of Appeals ruling been allowed to stand, as the government urged, the principle of accountability for the taking of human life would have yielded to selective application of dangerously broad standards of fraud. As it turned out, the Supreme Court fashioned its own dialectic, roughly hewn, painful to swallow, but morally responsive to the difficult challenge posed by this troubling case.

* See I. Rosenbaum, *The Holocaust and Halakha* (1976), pp. 151-155.

Arms & the Movies

Richard Grenier

THE MOST hackneyed profundity bandied about in recent years by people who confine their reading of classic authors to *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* is George Santayana's "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Translated into plain language, this usually means, "No more Vietnams"—although few of the quoters show signs of having read the work of Santayana's from which the quotation is taken, an essay which no more than seven sentences after the line in *Bartlett's*, reads: "In a moving world readaptation is the price of longevity." This last, much more characteristic of what Santayana was trying to get at, obviously argues very strongly against "the past" teaching us any fixed, rigid, simplistic lesson, since there's a lot of very heterogeneous past out there to remember, and it keeps getting added to and, in its ordering of suggested imperatives, changing.

Now the film-makers of Hollywood probably know little more of the past than most of their countrymen, but if there's one small piece of the past they know exceedingly well it is how successful their last movie was, and when it comes to readapting they can sometimes move with the speed of light—much more swiftly than the op-ed page of the *New York Times*, for example, which subsists in a rarefied, airless world, protected from all real competition. Among Hollywood films, competition is ferocious. Movies are a series of one-shot deals. There is no such thing as a faithful constituency—nowadays, as will be seen, not even for stars. Yet, if the men of Hollywood

do not crave eternal life, they certainly crave longevity. They do not need Santayana to tell them to readapt. When their careers depend on it, they will turn on a dime.

Bill Murray is one of a whole brood of talented young comic actors to come out of NBC's famous *Saturday Night Live*. Things move swiftly in television, too, and the program is now almost dead, but nearly all its principal members had made it to the movies before the fall. (It must be realized that everyone in television, from top to bottom, would rather be in films than TV.) An anomaly, in the case of *Saturday Night Live*, is that Murray, who was really part of the program's second team, bids fair to become the biggest movie star of the bunch. His first time out was *Meatballs*, an undistinguished children's summer camp story he made up in Canada, with Murray playing the head counselor. To most people's surprise, it scored very heavily at the box-office. Murray, overnight a full-fledged film star, apparently decided it was time for a "statement."

The *Saturday Night Live* crowd as a group had been famous for its iconoclasm. God, Country, Yale—if it was sacred, they were against it. As usual in America for those who came of age in the 60's, their barbs were almost invariably directed against the conservative "establishment." Chevy Chase, the program's leader in its first, most cutting, years, might have done serious damage, I think, to then President Gerald Ford. I don't remember Jimmy Carter or Edward Kennedy (not to mention Barry Commoner) suffering anywhere nearly as badly at their hands. Of all the group, I confess I always had a weakness for Murray, who had a special kind of

cool unflappability. Beneath the comic persona, I imagined I detected a presence that would allow him to do more than the satirical sketches which were the show's formula. But *Saturday Night Live* was a counterculture outfit. So it was no surprise that Murray, now a real screen star in his own right, should have turned to Hunter Thompson, the *Fear and Loathing* man, for the subject of his first major movie. Thompson, the father and perhaps only true practitioner of "gonzo" journalism, did not write *Where the Buffalo Roam* but was its nihilistic, egomaniacal, calculatedly outrageous hero (played by Murray).

Hunter Thompson is the counterculture made flesh. In *Where the Buffalo Roam* we see him in clearly fictionalized accounts of his escapades as a journalist, covering a narcotics trial, a gun-running operation, a Super Bowl championship, and finally, his apotheosis, the 1972 presidential election, scandalizing respectable members of society with his wild and disruptive dope-taking, drinking, and general obstreperousness. The film's high point occurs when the rowdy Thompson (Murray) humiliates Richard Nixon (Richard M. Dixon) in a men's room, spraying the President with a fire extinguisher. (This scene, exceptionally, was written by Thompson himself, in collaboration with Murray.) A newsmagazine reviewer lamented the film's lack of "liberating comic anarchy," attributing this in part to a failure to bring to the screen the sense that Thompson's wild writing and behavior were a "deeply pained response to what he saw as the pervasive cant, hypocrisy, and phoniness in American official culture." I differ appreciably with that critic; if there was anything deep about Hunter Thompson it was his irresponsibility, bred of security, affluence, and a special and acute form of narcissism.

The film, in any event, was released in the year of the Reagan landslide. The Russians were in Af-

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ghanistan. American hostages were being held in Teheran. Hell's Angels were roaring about with their *Fuck Iran* buttons. The youth of America (Murray's most devout fans) were beginning to wear U.S.-eagle T-shirts proclaiming *Don't Mess with America*. Forty-eight hours beforehand, the studio distributing *Where the Buffalo Roam* informed Los Angeles critics by telegram that all press screenings had been canceled, and when the film was released the verdict of the public was brutal and definitive. Movie houses were empty, and the film was withdrawn almost instantly. I suspect the experience caused Murray his own kind of deeply pained response.

Now I would not presume to look deep into the heart of Bill Murray. I would not presume even to affirm that Bill Murray has a heart. But it clearly dawned on Murray that he had been seriously misled as to the current attitude of the American people toward their own country, and that, if he could only work it into his "value system" in some way, it might turn out that *patriotism pays*. But before explaining how and in what manner Bill Murray joined the Army, fought the Russians, and learned to love the flag (if not find God), I would like for purposes of context and contrast to turn to a film I consider the Great Beast of anti-American military comedies, a film which scarcely ten years ago won the National Society of Film Critics' award for best movie of the year, plus the Academy Award for the best screenplay, *M*A*S*H*.

TELEVISION viewers should be warned that the vastly successful TV series by the same name, now in its ninth year, has very little to do with the original movie. With the leading role now played by Alan Alda, about whom it has been said, "Is there a dog mean enough to bite this man?," the series has become an innocuous television "sit-com." As far as I know, no one has ever applied the word "innocuous" to the original *M*A*S*H*, whose screenplay was written by the late Ring Lardner, Jr., one of the key members of the old "Hollywood Ten."

*M*A*S*H*, an acronym for Mo-

bile Army Surgical Hospital, traces the escapades of a group of madcap Army doctors, having fun while saving lives behind the lines during a Korean war which resembles—and is designed to resemble—the war in Vietnam. In addition to the gory stitching together of wounded men being helicoptered in from combat (an original background for a comedy of any sort), they save the life of a Korean baby, as well as that of a fellow doctor intent on suicide because he suspects himself of latent homosexuality (they provide him with a beautiful, married, respectable Army nurse who cheerfully services his heterosexual urges, thereby proving she is a good sport). They also take part in a somewhat pointless pastiche of the Last Supper, and, in a climactic sequence, win a football game for their outfit by drugging the star of the opposing team. One wonders a bit at the beneficial effect of sport played according to such principles, but Lardner explained that his heroes were merely "maintaining sanity in the rampant insanity of war."

But the center of *M*A*S*H* is the relationship between the team of prankster heroes, Hawkeye (Donald Sutherland) and Trapper John (Elliott Gould), and the unit's chief nurse, Major Houlihan (Sally Kellerman), a beautiful, tense, inhibited blond who has the reprehensible habit of taking her duties, and herself, very seriously. She is guilty, as we shall see, of Hypocrisy—for the purposes of this film, a cardinal sin. Hawkeye and Trapper John have as bunkmate a fellow surgeon named Frank Burns (Robert Duvall), a fundamentalist Christian type who does such unattractive things as quote the Bible and pray out loud for, among others, "our Commander in Chief." Our heroes decide to teach him and Major Houlihan a lesson. They bug the nurse's tent and then broadcast her seduction by Burns over the camp's P.A. system to several square miles of attentive listeners. We hear the moans, the gasps, Major Houlihan's delirious, "I got hot lips! Kiss my hot lips!," her orgasms. The whole camp is listening. It's a real gas. The next morning Hawkeye taunts Burns by asking him if "Hot Lips" Houlihan is

a moaner or a screamer, adding, "Tell me, is she better than self-abuse?" Burns lunges at Hawkeye in a rage and is carried off the base in a strait jacket; Major Houlihan is henceforth known throughout the camp as "Hot Lips."

But the nurse's torments are not at an end; the boys have another trick up their sleeves. There is some debate as to whether or not her blond hair is natural, and they devise a playful way of finding out. They construct a device that will suddenly snap aloft the shower curtains while she is taking a shower. Major Houlihan enters the shower. The curtains go up. And she is left wet and naked before the male personnel of the entire camp, all forewarned and waiting gleefully for the show. Trembling and hysterical, she rushes to the tent of the camp commander who, in bed with his secretary, backs her up by declaring, "Goddamn it, Hot Lips! Resign your goddamn commission!"

WELL, I have sat through my share of French bedroom comedies (a pillar of the French theater, it is said), the new school of English sex comedies, and even old-fashioned American burlesque, and have been known to laugh at some examples of these forms, considering the sexual peccadilloes of *l'homme moyen sensuel* as valid a subject for humor as most others. But I have never watched an ostensible comedy with such stony grimness as I watched *M*A*S*H*, and this for the simple reason that I found it to be inspired by no humor, sexual or otherwise, but entirely by cruelty, malice, and an inordinate craving to humiliate. It would have been like laughing at a dog running frantically in circles, driven mad by a tin can some boys had tied to his tail. And also being asked to admire the boys.

What makes *M*A*S*H* even more repellent is that the torment our heroes inflict on their adversaries is administered so smugly, with an air of overweening sanctimony, as if anyone who stands in their way deserves what he gets. The film is astonishingly doctrinaire. Our heroes are, you see, *doctors*, men dedicated to the preservation of life. The Army, on the

other hand, is a vast machine dedicated to destroying the nation's enemies, which, in the terms of this movie, is a very bad thing to do. By the introduction of this simple device, making the heroes savers of lives, the film justifies all their actions, no matter how hateful. Thus, Hawkeye and Trapper John torment, torture, and humiliate their adversaries with singular ruthlessness, but all is permitted, and even socially beneficial, for are they not men of peace? Every figure in this movie who could possibly be thought of as symbolizing military authority, patriotism, or religion in any shape or form is systematically and relentlessly attacked, ridiculed, and vilified. A man prays to God? And for his commander in chief? Carry him off in a strait jacket! One of our medical heroes also gives his South Korean houseboy amphetamines to quicken his heartbeat and allow him to evade the draft, thereby doing an extra little bit for peace—which is to say, defeat—for there is little doubt that this was the kind of peace Mr. Lardner wanted.

But Hawkeye and Trapper John are worked into a state of virtuous brutality by more than just the Army, authority, and religion. Someone seems to have appointed them champions of candor as well, particularly the sexual candor and glorified promiscuity of the 60's to come, and any resistance to their efforts to turn the field hospital into a precursor of Plato's Retreat makes them quite lethal. We are expected to laugh merrily as they mercilessly bully their victims. For men presented to us as the personification of the free, liberated spirit, Hawkeye and Trapper John are remarkably intolerant of diversity. We are shown, of course, that they bear no real grudge toward Hot Lips, and when she capitulates and has sexual relations with one of them (what she wanted all along, the hypocrite), she is allowed to become "one of the guys," and is finally seen—apparently lobotomized—as an inept, laughable cheerleader at the football game. For, in addition to their other virtuous actions, our medical heroes have also been giving the nurse a kind of benevolent therapy: any shapely female willing to undergo the same

lobotomization, and make herself useful by passing scalpels and providing sexual services, will presumably be treated every bit as well. I submit that beneath its hearty, devil-may-care exterior *M*A*S*H* conceals a virulent hatred of women.

Still, one should never underrate the virtuosity of expert entertainers. Sutherland and Gould romp through the film as if permanently high on some appropriate narcotic—perhaps the only way the scenes could have been played—finding laughs in subtle effects of expression and timing. Without their efforts, and those of an unusually accomplished director (Robert Altman) and supporting cast (Robert Duvall, Tom Skerritt, Michael Murphy, René Auberjonois, Bud Cort, then all virtual newcomers), the movie might not have been able to disguise brutality as fun for anyone.

The reviews of *M*A*S*H*, in 1970, ranged from ecstatic to transfixed. Only one or two troubled notes were heard. Vincent Canby, in the *New York Times*, expressed "odd and disturbing suspicions that *M*A*S*H*'s good guys are essentially bastards," and regretted that these "dark premises" were dropped in favor of easy laughs. The implications of a film in which these two cut-up, anti-war surgeons were revealed as utter swine would be interesting to contemplate, but Canby did not do so, concluding, instead, that *M*A*S*H* was the movie equivalent of a new Broadway play by a "super Neil Simon." An outside contributor to the *Times* disliked the film for many excellent reasons, but affirmed that it was of course not "even vaguely political." How political *M*A*S*H* was can be gauged by imagining Ring Lardner, Jr., commissioned to write a comedy about a field hospital behind the lines of the Red Army at Stalingrad, or, closer to us perhaps, behind the lines of a Communist North Vietnamese unit at Khe Sanh. How would that uncompromising lover of peace and castigator of the "rampant insanity of war" have handled his characters then? Would he have abused and vilified all military leaders? Ridiculed all patriots? Somehow one suspects

not. On the face of it, Mr. Lardner seems an odd person to have designated himself the scourge of other people's hypocrisy.

Looking back from the perspective of a full decade, *M*A*S*H* strikes me now as a true monument to the 60's, every foot of it marked by the smug hooliganism of the radical Left. Its most essential trait is the complacent assumption that if one is in the right—on the correct side, the side of history, of "peace," "national liberation," or whatever—one can commit any brutality, any cruelty, any aggression. If one is right, human dignity no longer applies.

THERE is more than one definition of tragedy, but the definitions of comedy and humor are legion, from Aristotle to Ben Jonson, Shakespeare, Beaumarchais, Freud, Henri Bergson, the Surrealists. None of them has ever left me entirely satisfied. Jonson's theory of comedy, a famous one, was that it served a useful social purpose. It showed the audience a character given over to some kind of excess—avarice, for example—which, once adequately mocked on the stage, would strongly dissuade the audience from engaging in such a folly. This is interesting and instructive with respect to Jonson's purposes, if of little help in understanding why *Volpone* is funny.

At first glance the Jonsonian theory seems to fit rather well such of Molière's comedies as *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* later in the same century. Wasn't this *nouveau riche* tradesman excessive in the aping of his aristocratic betters? Wouldn't a sensible *nouveau riche* learn from his example? When one imagines performances of the play before the great nobles of the court of Louis XIV, where it was an immense success, the play takes on a different coloration, however. These dukes and marquises were plainly laughing at the risible aspirations of their social inferiors, much as they laughed at women's aspirations to learning in Molière's *Les Femmes Savantes*. Neither of these plays would provide much in the way of a cautionary example for a 17th-century French duke.

Court reaction to *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, another masterpiece of

Molière, was more complex. Scapin had a distinguished ancestor, the *commedia dell'arte's* Brighella (Harlequin's crony), as he was to have an illustrious descendant in the following century, Figaro. The play's situation, if not its plot, is simple. Scapin is a servant. But he is more intelligent, canny, adroit, imaginative, and effective than his master. He is, moreover, an uppity servant, and his master has to have him beaten now and then, at which Scapin protests vociferously. Still and all, it is a curious relationship: a servant more knowledgeable in the ways of the world than his master, more bold, more clever, more perspicacious, more capable of bringing things about.

Why would a French duke want to laugh at that? One can only assume that, with the Grand Monarch at the height of his powers, the majesty of his state unprecedented in modern history, Scapin would hardly be seen as a threat to the established order. Coming from a person of such low social rank, with the difference of stations in life so vast and unbridgeable, such impertinences as Scapin's were presumably found by the aristocracy to be piquant and amusing, constituting at worst a bit of good-natured chaffing of the grandeur of the nobility. If one's valet got out of hand, after all, one could always have him thrashed.

But in the 18th century, with France the arbiter of fashion in the theater as in much else, the character of the clever servant caught on like wildfire, reaching its apogee in Figaro. As pointed out by Tocqueville in *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, the nobility, conserving only its privileges, had lost not only its sense of responsibility but—the cause—all real power. One is tempted to think it had lost its wits as well for, five years before the taking of the Bastille, the court applauded *The Marriage of Figaro* with wild enthusiasm. Only Louis XVI himself saw something ominous in the play (and, indeed, eight years later, he went to the guillotine). Napoleon, for his part, called Figaro the harbinger of the Revolution, and declared that *The Marriage of Figaro* was "the Revolution already in action"—a rather imposing accolade

for a mere comedy, but awarded, of course, well after the fact. Beaumarchais, the play's author, who had risen from the streets to great wealth, high position at court, and the rank of nobleman, would have been the last person in the world to have deliberately fostered an insurrection, and, charged with treason by the new Republic, fled France for his life days before the outbreak of the famed September Massacres.

THE notion of comedy as deliberately subversive—as viewed by strict contemporaries—is, I believe, a phenomenon of the 20th century, and I am only aware of it from the time of Dada and the Surrealists, which is to say largely after the seizure of power in Russia by the Petrograd Soviet. Dada, which began in Zurich, was bitterly hostile to the Weimar Republic when it reached Berlin, and declared its enmity to the French *bourgeoisie* when it reached Paris. The Dadaists, who carried on very much like Hunter Thompson—one of them firing off pistol shots whenever the spirit moved him at a meeting at the *Salle des Sociétés Savantes* and another threatening to shoot up the audience at the opening night of Apollinaire's *The Breasts of Tiresias*—believed that comedy was seditious by its very nature, a view inherited by their successor movement, the Surrealists, and which in time fanned out through much of the Continental Left. The Marx Brothers, for example, were great favorites of intellectual leftists, and there was no arguing with them: the Marx Brothers comedies were subversive, representing the triumph of "the anarchic spirit." In our own time, the identical argument was sustained at great length by Kenneth Tynan, the late English theater critic and former leader of Britain's Angry Young Men. Tynan was categorical: if it was not revolutionary, it was not comedy.

There is little doubt that the great renewal of interest in old Marx Brothers movies during the 60's was due to a feeling that their comedy was anarchic, "anti-establishment," that every time Groucho outwitted the comically complacent society dowagers played

by Margaret Dumont it was the Chase Manhattan Bank itself that was brought low. The Marx Brothers political cult probably reached its zenith in France during the pseudo-revolution of 1968, when student rebels scrawled on the Paris walls their allegiance to *Marxism, Groucho Faction* and to the four Marx Brothers: Karl, Groucho, Chico, and Harpo (Karl displacing poor Zeppo). The credentials of these students as revolutionaries were somewhat tarnished by their behavior in the final act of the drama of 1968 when de Gaulle ordered the French army's combat units, deployed in Germany, to return to France to impose order. When the electrifying news bulletins broke that French tanks were crossing the Rhine, the Marxists of the Groucho Faction disappeared like dust. And it could well be that their theory of comedy was no better than their theory of revolution.

My own view on these matters is that comedy is not essentially revolutionary, royalist, moderate, leftist, or rightist. A comedy, like any other work of art, could be any of these things, or none of them. Laughter has at its core the relationship of superior to inferior. When a commoner laughs at a duchess in a musical comedy it is because, her wealth and social position notwithstanding, she is being portrayed as a twit. At its most primitive, laughter is independent of kindness or compassion. Quite decent people give a quick, compulsive laugh when a man slips on a banana peel, because he is clumsier than they. Boys, as noted earlier, have been known to laugh at dogs driven mad by tin cans tied to their tails, in which category of humor I place much of *M*A*S*H*. On a somewhat higher level, when an artist systematically travesties all of a society's symbols of authority, one can grant quite easily that his work could be subversive. Over the long haul, however, comedy has been used far more often to uphold the established order than to subvert it.

The most complex problem in comedy is not the fool, the twit, the idiot, but the rascal, the witty rogue. When Scapin, in the midst of his imbroglis, proclaims, "I despise those cowardly hearts, so aware of consequences that they

never dare do anything," this is not the voice of a fool, but a man of daring. The greatest figures of comedy, although engaging in preposterous shenanigans and allowing themselves to be laughed at abundantly, retain another quality which compels the audience's admiration, leaving it in no doubt that the rogue is master of the game. As we have seen, much has been made of the anarchic spirit in the Marx Brothers comedies, but a great deal of comedy contains an anarchic component. The question is one of balancing a sometimes quite large number of elements, in this case even a burnt-cork mustache. In the Marx Brothers films, Groucho triumphs and the rogue is master. But does anarchy triumph? I myself do not believe the Marx Brothers ever subverted anything.

BILL MURRAY's *Stripes* will seem a very slight work to bear the weight of much analysis. Slight it certainly is. Yet it is also the great comedy hit of the season, quite possibly of the year. "In terms of holdover power and dollar figures," wrote *Variety*, *Stripes* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* are the "strongest films in the marketplace." To give a notion of the scale of such a success, *Stripes* made more money in its opening three weeks than Woody Allen's most successful movie, *Manhattan*, did in its entire run. This is no indication of quality one way or another, of course, but *Stripes* has a peculiar interest simply because it stars Bill Murray, a performer who comes bearing quite an amount of intellectual baggage from his earlier life. It is an indication of the overpowering importance of the personality of major comic actors in comedy, incidentally, that connoisseurs who would think a speaker an ignoramus if he referred to *The Asphalt Jungle* as a Sterling Hayden film (the star) and not a John Huston film (the director), quite habitually neglect the directors, for instance, of the Marx Brothers movies. (How often is one reminded that *Animal Crackers* was directed by Victor Heerman, or *Go West* by Edward Buzzell?) And Bill Murray is especially interesting as a practitioner of the most difficult and enigmatic form of comedy, personifying as he does the witty rogue,

the direct descendant, if you wish, of Brighella and Scapin. He breezes through roles with a cool, unflappable air of superiority, cynical, patently insincere, and yet manages to be funny. He is supremely knowing. No iniquity, one feels, would surprise him. His apparent cynicism might be his most distinctive trait. Does Bill Murray believe in anything? One is tempted to answer, not much. Is he, then, a threat to the stability of the state? We shall see.

In *Stripes* Murray plays Winger (note the name), an unsuccessful photographer moonlighting as a cab driver, who in one day loses his job, his girl, his apartment, his car, and a pizza. "But I'm part of a lost and restless generation!" he pleads to his girlfriend, who leaves him nonetheless. He talks his buddy Zisky (Harold Ramis, co-author of the screenplay) into enlisting in the Army with him. When the recruiting sergeant asks them if they are homosexuals, Winger and Zisky exchange tender looks, and Zisky answers, "You mean like flaming?" Zisky describes himself as a pacifist, by which he means, "Never hit a man in anger unless you're absolutely sure you can get away with it." As they are being issued their fatigue uniforms, Winger moans, "When I think that chicks in New York are paying top dollar for this garbage." Talking with fellow members of his platoon, he says, "I always used to wonder why you guys made it with the chicks, but now I realize it's not just the uniforms, it's the stories you tell." Eyeing the new recruits, one pretty female MP says to another, "I hope we don't go to war."

In Sergeant Hulka (Warren Oates), the platoon's drill sergeant, the film introduces its principal authority figure and, of course, its central theme, for as in all military comedies it is the interplay of the individual and authority that is at the heart of the matter. Hulka lays it on the line. He is going to make them into soldiers. "Now there's just you, me, and Uncle Sam," he says forbiddingly. "And as we go along together, you're going to see that me and Uncle Sam are one and the same." Winger is constantly on the verge of a kind of furtive insubordination, and is just as constantly

punished, crawling through mud, doing pushups in the rain. He tries apologizing to Hulka, with dignity: "I didn't mean any offense, Sergeant," asking his buddy afterward, "Do you think he bought it?" Says Zisky: "Not a chance." At some further hint of insolence from Winger, the Sergeant calls him into the latrine, tells him being a soldier means discipline, duty, honor, courage, calls him a "gutless punk," and invites him to take a swing at him. Winger swings wild. Hulka lands a heavy right. Winger goes down and stays down. One for the Army.

"Some day maybe you'll understand," Hulka has said to Winger, and when the Sergeant is injured and the third platoon of Bravo Company is left leaderless, it "trains itself" overnight (a feat which would surely have required divine intervention). Appearing late for the graduation parade at the end of basic training, the platoon, having spent the night drilling in the motor-pool garage, looks like a scurvy band of guerrillas, but does the kind of crack, flashy, superbly ornate drill that wins drill-team championships, and earns Winger's platoon the privilege of demonstrating the Army's newest assault vehicle in Europe.

At this point the plot really takes off. Winger, of course, has not truly fallen into line, and he and Zisky "borrow" the assault vehicle (which looks suspiciously like an ordinary camper) for a weekend jaunt with their MP girlfriends. When their magnificently silly company commander, Captain Stillman (John Larroquette), discovers that the vehicle is missing, he takes Sergeant Hulka and the rest of the platoon out looking for it—and ends up in Czechoslovakia. Hearing a "May Day" call on the radio in the vehicle, Zisky, grasping the situation, says, "My God, they're in Czechoslovakia." To which Winger replies, "Let's go get 'em." Zisky, awed, asks, "Winger, do the words 'act of war' mean anything to you?" "Aw, come on!" says Winger. "It's just Czechoslovakia. We zip in. We zip out. It's like going to Wisconsin." (This line brings down the house.) So Winger, Zisky, and two pretty women do thereby take on

the Soviet Army, defeat it in battle, and bring their buddies home to freedom.

The returning heroes are accorded a welcome on the order of that given the ex-hostages returning from Teheran. Winger emerges from the plane at the airport in uniform, as sassy as ever, with a drink in his hand, the band playing. "A surprise party!" he cries. "Whose idea was this? This is ridiculous! Let's all go up to my place."

This closing sequence is interrupted by a series of newspaper and magazine front pages depicting the event from various viewpoints. First we have a Czechoslovak daily which, when translated, has as its headline: LOCAL BOY BEATS OFF YANK INVADERS. Then a small-town U.S. newspaper with Sergeant Hulka's picture: ARMY HERO RETIRES. *Penthouse* features a photograph of one of the pretty female MP's in a special issue devoted to: AMERICA'S FIGHTING WOMEN. A men's magazine, *Guts*, carries: ZISKY RATES RUSSIANS: THEY'RE PUSSIES. The *Nome News* has: ARCTIC COMMAND WELCOMES CAPTAIN STILLMAN. But the zinger is the cover of *Newsweek* with a

picture of a dippy-looking Winger: THE NEW ARMY. CAN AMERICA SURVIVE? Winger and Hulka meet for the last time, and the retiring Sergeant traps Winger into a military salute. The movie's last words are Winger's admiring, "You old dog."

I WOULD not want to over-interpret what is after all a benign little thirty-million-dollar movie (box-office receipts in the first three weeks). A scene in which one of Winger's buddies engages in mud wrestling with half a dozen naked women, for example, is without much political significance. (He wins.) I note, however, that we have come a long way from *M*A*S*H*. *Stripes* has one silly officer, the Captain, Winger's foil, but the General, the Colonel, and above all Sergeant Hulka are all treated with great respect. Czechoslovakia is an enemy country. Patriotism, the Army, and bravery—if not exactly discipline—are all honored. The soldiers have so much fun that the movie might be used for recruiting purposes by the Army itself. No authority figure is humiliated. The film contains no cruelty. I will let the reader decide

whether or not *Stripes* represents the victory of the anarchic spirit—which is of course present throughout the picture. Winger never really does knuckle under, of course, but then again neither does Scapin. In the French theater, in a tradition going back to Molière, Scapin, having given his master a thumping incognito and gotten himself forgiven by trickery, is carried off the stage at the end of the play in triumph. *Stripes* is far more respectful.

At the beginning of the Night of the Long Drill, during which our heroes miraculously become quite dazzlingly expert at the manual of arms, Winger makes an inspirational speech to the leaderless platoon. "We're going to do this," he cries, "because we're Americans! And what does it mean to be an American? It means our forefathers were kicked out of every decent country in the world. We're mutts! Feel his nose! [He feels the nose of a comrade.] It's cold. You see? But there is nothing more faithful or more lovable than a mutt!" He winds up with, "We're all dogfaces! And we're American soldiers! Now make me proud!" And the mutts win.

Fiction

Sequels

Pearl K. Bell

WHEN John Updike published *Rabbit, Run* in 1960—though he was only twenty-eight, it was his fourth book and second novel—no one could have expected that it would be the first of a continuing,

PEARL K. BELL, our regular fiction critic, reviewed books by Toni Morrison, Francine du Plessix Gray, and D.M. Thomas in the August issue.

if intermittent, chronicle of working-class life in a small industrial town of southern Pennsylvania. In vision and idea *Rabbit, Run* was remarkably seamless and whole. Harry (Rabbit) Angstrom's life beyond the last words of the novel seemed irreversible and fixed, so easily predictable that there could be nothing left to say. Now Updike has written the *third* volume in the

life and times of Rabbit Angstrom, and the most startling thing about it is its title, *Rabbit Is Rich*.*

No such fate seemed less likely to befall the scared hero of the first book and its sequel, *Rabbit Redux* (1971), the perpetually overaged boy, manacled to the memories of his short-lived glory as a high-

* Knopf, 390 pp., \$13.95.

school basketball star, who does not know how to grow up. This kind of arrested development is quintessentially American, involving as it does our obsession with youth and the mystical power of sport as heroism and sport as the embodiment of battle. It transcends class, since it afflicts the tarnished golden boys of John Cheever's Westchester as it does the blue-collar Rabbit Angstrom. But the unhappy, bad-luck figure of the ex-athlete provided Updike with the opportunity to draw a meticulous and compassionate portrait of small-town America in the 50's. The novelist's pitying affection for Rabbit, a huge, inarticulate dreamer caught in a bewildering trap of sexual, economic, and psychological helplessness, acquired its tense integrity from Updike's unsentimental clarity, and allowed him to embrace Angstrom's world without patronizing it. For that reason, *Rabbit, Run* remains the most affecting and least stylistically overwrought of Updike's novels.

Its sequel a decade later, *Rabbit Redux*, revealed a less winning side of Updike's virtuosity. Written during a time of extraordinary social and political turmoil, the novel was a display case for the *Zeitgeist*, and the result was as contrived as it was emotionally meretricious. The tenderness that was so palpable beneath the bleak hopelessness of *Rabbit, Run* had now given way to a shrill, topical tattoo—the first moon landing and the Vietnam war, black revolution and sexual promiscuity, middle-class dropouts and drugs. Whereas the young Rabbit (in the first novel) was forever running away from his morose, alcoholic wife, ten years later Janice takes her cue from the times, deserting husband and child for a more trendy and sophisticated lover who sneers at Rabbit's muddled patriotism, his defense of the war, and his naive certainty that "Wherever America is, there is freedom, and wherever America is not madness rules with chains. . . ." Drenched in irony, Updike's lapidary brilliance grew slick and verged on the tendentious as he turned Harry Angstrom into a symbol of Middle America, a peg for political and cultural attitudes that the writer now found morally

questionable. The issue was not really political—Updike's own political sympathies in the book seemed to be, if not masked, then certainly profoundly ambivalent. Rather, the issue was one of Updike's relation to his central character. Once the fragile links of sympathy between writer and character are broken, condescension threatens to fill the void. The more Rabbit was manipulated to demonstrate how Updike had mastered the historical moment, the more synthetic the novel became. More important, it made problematic Updike's relation to his locale.

The great or compelling writer has both a voice and a country which he inhabits so completely that we cannot think of him as belonging anywhere else: Bellow's Chicago, Faulkner's Mississippi, Günter Grass's Danzig, Robert Penn Warren's South. It does not matter that they sometimes write about other places and forsake their "countries" for years and books on end; their right to this territory of the imagination can never be disputed.

Updike's problem is that, though his voice is brilliant, he does not know what territory to claim. His reputation is that of the archetypal *New Yorker* writer—worldly, witty, eloquent, detached—who can write with knowledgeable grace about everything from Ted Williams and the Red Sox to Roland Barthes and French structuralism. Yet there is also Updike's fascination for over two decades with the drab, inarticulate, small-town world of Rabbit Angstrom. In fact Updike himself also comes from a small town in Pennsylvania. Though not from the same class—his father was a schoolteacher—he must have known people like Rabbit in high school and has been trying to understand himself, if only as an observer, in relation to them. But his ambition, as well as his wide-ranging curiosity, provided him with very different fictional settings.

His first novel, *The Poorhouse Fair*, was a canny move; unlike most novelists, who start out writing about their youth, he chose to deal with the very old. A number of his novels, such as *Couples* and *Marry Me*, described the sexual quadrilles

in middle-class suburbs, but they seemed little more than short stories he had already written several times over, and they are several times forgotten. More recently he bravely tried his hand at an ambitious political novel, *The Coup*, a very uneven but witty comedy about an African dictator, but the effect of the story was undercut by romantic simplicities about the corruption of African purity by American materialism.* Yet none of these places was the terrain a novelist needs to stake out, to know that *this* is his land.

In *Rabbit Is Rich*, Updike now seems to be making that claim. With three rabbits scampering around the field, Updike has a country, a set of narratives which have continuity over time, fixity of place, and a river-run he can command as his own. Yet in returning to the small Pennsylvania town of Brewer, he has still not clarified his intentions. On the one hand he seems to have wanted to bring his continuing chronicle of Middle America up to date in a documentary novel similar to *Rabbit Redux*, shuttling between the fevered news of the world and the quotidian ordinariness of Harry Angstrom's life, as the American dream comes increasingly under siege. On the other hand, John Updike has understandably been meditating, at the age of forty-eight, about the profit and loss of middle age, with its diminishing expectations and its threat of dwindling powers. And, in the middle of the journey, he is returning to a character whose passage over time matches his own.

The immediate difficulty, however, stems not only from the return to this familiar locale, but from the writer's voice. To be authentic, the two must somehow be of a piece—the nervous rhythms of Chicago for Bellow, the lazy delta speech for Eudora Welty, etc. Harry Angstrom, never much of a thinker, is an unlikely vessel for the intellectual novelist's elegant reflection about the dark wood where the journey takes place. The voice of the novel is presumably Harry's, but the prose oscillates between flat

* I reviewed this novel in COMMENTARY, April 1979.

colloquialism (one chapter begins: "The hostages have been taken. Nelson [Rabbit's son] has been working at Springer Motors for a month. Teresa [Nelson's wife] is seven months pregnant") and Updikean lyricism. One wonders how the man who never went beyond high school and never reads a book becomes miraculously capable, on a flight to the Caribbean, of this sinewy eloquence:

He doesn't mind getting a little high, but he doesn't want to sacrifice awareness of the colors around him, of the revelation that outside Brewer there is a planet without ruts in it. In such moments of adventure he is impatient with his body that its five windows aren't enough, he can't get the world all in. . . . God, having shrunk in Harry's middle years to the size of a raisin lost under the car seat, is suddenly great again, everywhere like a radiant wind.

Where did these crystalline images come from, as though Harry were speaking in tongues?

Updike seems to have been perfectly serious when he told the *Harvard Crimson*, not long after *Rabbit Redux* was published, that "intellectually, I'm not essentially advanced over Harry Angstrom. I went to Harvard, it's true, and wasn't much good at basketball . . . other than that we're rather similar." So much for Harvard. But what he was talking about, one would guess, is his claim to understand Harry Angstrom completely. Though he may have resolved to confine himself to the mind and language of Rabbit, he could not tolerate the verbal strait-jacket for very long. Time and again the importunate images break through, and while they can be beautiful and instructive, the illusion of authenticity is destroyed.

We are too aware in reading *Rabbit Is Rich* of the distance between Harry Angstrom and John Updike. And it is the confusion of voices above all that warns us this may not be Updike's country. To hedge against the muddle at the heart of the book, Updike has wrapped his characters in a carapace of bad news from 1979: Sky-lab is falling, the inflation rate is rising, gasoline supplies are shrink-

ing, and Brewer's black population is growing. Hard times are back, but at forty-six Harry Angstrom, paunchy and easily winded, thinks he can keep the rot at bay, for a while at least, because he is now well off.

Unemployed at the end of *Rabbit Redux*, his linotyper's job lost to technological progress, Harry, long since reconciled with Janice, inherited her father's Toyota agency after the old man died, and it has flourished with OPEC greed. Though he no longer feels threatened by life "now that he has a margin of resources," and the panic that dogged him has stilled, Harry is depressed by the feeling that everything is winding down and running dry, that the weight of time has left "patches of burnt-out gray cells where there used to be wild lust and dreaming and wild-eyed dread. . . ." Money can't remove the canker of unease, and he wonders what he has done with his life, why "a stony truce seems to prevail between him and God."

THE domestic crises in Harry's life are bound into a tight web of carefully deployed facts about the events of the day: not just sensational news like the taking of the hostages, or the zooming prices of gold and silver, but the football-and-television brine of popular culture that pickles the Angstrom family and millions more like them. We are told exactly how, every fact and figure burnished to a high gloss of accuracy, Toyotas are sold, and how to arrange for the best mortgage in a time of swollen interest rates. Updike bestows this explicitly detailed factuality on Harry's sex life as well, and even at its kinkiest this has no more interest than the names of all those sit-coms and game shows. By now this kind of voyeuristic description has become so commonplace in novels, and so boring, that one wonders why it's there. What passed for uninhibited boldness in the earlier Rabbit novels now seems self-indulgent, just another set of hackneyed facts substituting for thought and imagination.

What is Updike trying to tell us about the middle-aged crisis of the American soul in these unrelenting accounts of Harry Angstrom as

lover and as automobile dealer? Updike has said elsewhere that he finds the Middle American world full of mystery, but he has made little effort in *Rabbit Is Rich* to illuminate its dark reality. The real mystery is why he has chosen to remain so strenuously on the surface of Harry Angstrom's life, content with a cold literalness of sex and cars and television that is against the grain of his imaginative intelligence and his gift for the delicate revelations of metaphor (admittedly a gift he overworks, but a gift for all that). The topical flags he sets up to alert us to the critical urgencies of this time and this place reek of calculation. And the ruminations about middle age and its lengthening shadows convey more sentiment than feeling. If Middle America is indeed a mystery, its secrets have evaded Updike. It is not his country.

THOMAS BERGER is another prolific novelist without a country but possessed of a distinctive voice. In one of the strangest literary careers in recent memory, Berger has set himself the task of mastering many different genres—Western, private eye, hardboiled crime documentary, Arthurian legend, science fiction (with a message about sex roles), and, in the recent *Neighbors*, Kafkaesque fable about motiveless harassment and victimization. Yet that witty and mordant voice is clearly heard in only four of the eleven novels Berger has published over the past twenty-two years.

This group stands outside his experimental forays into various genres, and deals with an engaging creature named Carlo Reinhart, the protagonist of Berger's first novel, *Crazy in Berlin* (1958). He is a huge, intellectually eager but unfinished G.I. racketing around the American Zone just after the end of the war, and he turns up again at irregular intervals in *Reinhart in Love*, *Vital Parts*, and now *Reinhart's Women*.^{*} That first novel was an ambitious mixture of high moral earnestness and knockabout farce, in which the callow twenty-one-year-old Reinhart, at once guilty and brashly assertive about his German ancestry, forces himself

* Delacorte, 295 pp., \$13.95.

to think honestly, for the first time in his life, about his unexamined prejudices toward the Jews, his ambiguous feelings about the Germans, and the sober lessons of the war. Unlike his fellow-soldiers, most of whom are high-rolling entrepreneurs in the black market, Reinhart wants to hear out the ordinary Germans he meets, and he thus becomes the recipient of some bizarre confessions that may or may not be true.

But on another level of *Crazy in Berlin*, beyond the obsessive monologues about Jewishness and Germanness, Reinhart's escapades displayed Berger's exuberant talent for ridiculing the military. Though anticipating the mood of *Catch-22*, Berger's novel was much more demanding in language and ideas, which probably explains why Heller's novel, published three years later, caught the tide of success that Berger missed.

In *Reinhart in Love* (1962), he is mustered out of the Army and comes home to Ohio, where he is constantly entangled in the extravagant lunacies of postwar America, and marries the meanest girl in town. Except for some sharp-tongued asides about the fools and scoundrels who plague his days, Reinhart no longer gives much thought to the burning issues of political and personal morality that had absorbed him in Berlin; daily life has proved too much for him.

It became brilliantly clear in the next volume, *Vital Parts* (1970), that Berger is a master of satirical farce, instinctively drawn to the mad, the ludicrous, the grotesque. For some perverse reason he has given himself the room farce demands only in this wonderfully funny novel, which converts the world of Reinhart into gleeful caricature which never lapses into cruelty. Reinhart's wife is not merely bitchy but demented on a grand scale. The nasty insolence of his radical hippie son is unmitigated by the faintest stirrings of guilt or self-doubt. In his son's eyes Reinhart, who marched off at eighteen to fight the Nazis, "was now just another dirty old fascist." In fact the fascist fails at every-

thing he undertakes, and for a while he seems doomed to remaining a fat voyeur and a hopeless loser, needled by blighted memories of a time when he aspired to be a philosopher king "vitalized by the blood of a poet's expansive heart." In a plot thick with mad scientists, shady millionaires, weird but sexy secretaries, and respectable—indeed, Republican—prostitutes, Reinhart struggles to keep his head clear of the pounding chaos, and only in the end discovers that a father's love for his overweight and gormless daughter can be his salvation.

Though the Berger of *Vital Parts*, with its ingenious absurdities and slapstick vitality, might be thought to bear some resemblance to horsemen of the apocalypse like Vonnegut and Pynchon, his sensibility is crucially different. He came closest to their mood in *Crazy in Berlin*, set as it was in a time and place not yet recovered from the insanities of war, but not even there did Berger indulge in the doom-haunted cackling of the absurdists, and in the later Reinhart novels he was too deeply engaged with the comic fate of one good man to reduce him to a prophetic symbol of the cataclysm before us. In any case Berger is too quirky and too much of a loner to join any modish chorus. Indeed, in the past decade he has removed himself so reclusively from the literary hurly-burly that, according to one account, his publisher has never met him.

PARADOXICALLY, the tone of *Vital Parts*, even at its most antic, is genial—not a quality one associates with a recluse. But this geniality has led to a bewildering slackness in *Reinhart's Women*. The farcical episodes have become strained and unfunny, which is perhaps inevitable in a novel whose principal, indeed obsessive, subject is the joy of cooking. And not just boiling and buttering, as Julia Child once characterized the main activity in American kitchens, but the intricate art of French high cuisine. In the ten years since Reinhart divorced his rebarbative wife at the end of *Vital Parts*, and settled down contentedly with his daughter, he has discovered that "cooking was

the only thing in life he had ever done well." The would-be philosopher king, a flop at selling real estate and TV sets (not to mention a harebrained scheme for freezing the dead), has at last found his true calling. Comfortably supported by his daughter, now a thin and beautiful model, Reinhart can whip up *oeufs en meurette* or a rich *dacquoise* with imperturbable ease while passing bemused judgment on the changing scene in "the most boring era in the history of the race."

The once vicious hippie son is now a no less vicious stockbroker and an insufferable prig. Another relic of the 60's once leader of the Black Assassins, now runs a religious commune. Reinhart's wife comes back to torment him. But nothing that happens in the course of *Reinhart's Women* engages Thomas Berger's imagination very deeply—except for the preparation and consumption of all manner of glorious food. Unlike that other zealous celebrant of cooking in fiction, Günter Grass, who was equally generous with recipes and kitchen hints in *The Flounder*, Berger has not bothered to relate his culinary enthusiasm to some loftier and less perishable theme. Food in a novel, however expertly described, offers little food for thought.

In this last book, Berger seems to have closed in upon himself. None of the genre novels has been a parody, and Berger claims to be celebrating each form he turns to, but there is a self-conscious sterility to most of these displays of literary virtuosity. Only the Western, *Little Big Man*, breathed an air of its own un beholden to the cast-iron mold of formula. Yet *Vital Parts*, loose and free, crackles with exuberant vitality as Berger skewers the malice and greed that threaten his good-natured and feckless hero on every side. It is hard to know what to make of Berger's idiosyncratic body of work, but one thing is clear: the Reinhart lode has been exhausted. Perhaps Berger, and Updike, should listen to Harry Angstrom's complaint about the movies: "D'you ever get the feeling everything these days is sequels? . . . Like people are running out of ideas."

Books in Review

American Mosaic

ETHNIC AMERICA: A HISTORY. By THOMAS SOWELL. *Basic Books*. 353 pp. \$16.95.

Reviewed by WILLIAM PETERSEN

IF ONE came to this book fresh, having read nothing else on the subject, one might find it a deceptively simple work. Apart from an introduction and a conclusion, it consists of nine chapters on ethnic sectors of the American population—Irish, Germans, Jews, Italians, Chinese, Japanese, Negroes, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans. Each gives a brief description of the group's homeland, conditions of immigration, past experiences in this country, and situation today. The documentation is thorough, sometimes running to two or three footnotes per sentence. An improbably naive reader might well get the impression that the book's forthright presentation reflected a similarly straightforward method of composition. In fact, however, this seeming simplicity conceals a very high order of art.

Thomas Sowell's first book was *Black Education: Myths and Tragedies*, published in 1972. There, in an effective amalgam of autobiography and general analysis, he told how a black from a slum background was almost defeated in life by the utterly demeaning assumption that he could acquire learning only through programs designed for persons of low intelligence. During the decade since then, Sowell has written constantly on one or another facet of ethnicity. The apparently uncomplicated *Ethnic America* is a distillation of his sustained research and thought.

Most works on race and nationality have been written by sociologists, who—apart from rare exceptions—are trapped within that discipline's all too manifest limits. Sowell, an economist, is free of

such encumbrances. He writes a clear English which occasionally rises to a literary style of high quality. Eschewing jargon, he also eschews the theories embedded in jargon. Thus he holds that there are no "minorities" in American society, for there is no "majority." Moreover, each ethnic community is unitary only in part. Differences, such as those between "lace-curtain" and "shanty" Irish, or between German and East European Jews, divide every "minority" into competing sectors. Instead of glib contrasts among groups, Sowell offers a far more complex "mosaic" made up of elements in constant and sometimes rapid change.

Economists deal professionally with two of the most significant elements of national life: demography and income levels. This book is chock-full of facts, many unfamiliar and surprising, in these two areas. Sowell shows, for example, how variations among ethnic groups in fertility levels and crime rates can be ascribed largely to their different age structures—a demographic commonplace that many social analysts nevertheless overlook. In drawing his portrait of ethnic vitality he points out that around 1850 the country had 27 daily German-language newspapers in fifteen cities, as well as more than 200 other periodical publications in German. To demonstrate the enduring quality of ethnic and sub-ethnic ties he observes that still today the home locality or region in Italy is reflected in Italian Americans' residential patterns, organizations, and even voting proclivities. These are not dry statistics, but provide a fascinating underpinning for Sowell's description of America's ethnic diversity.

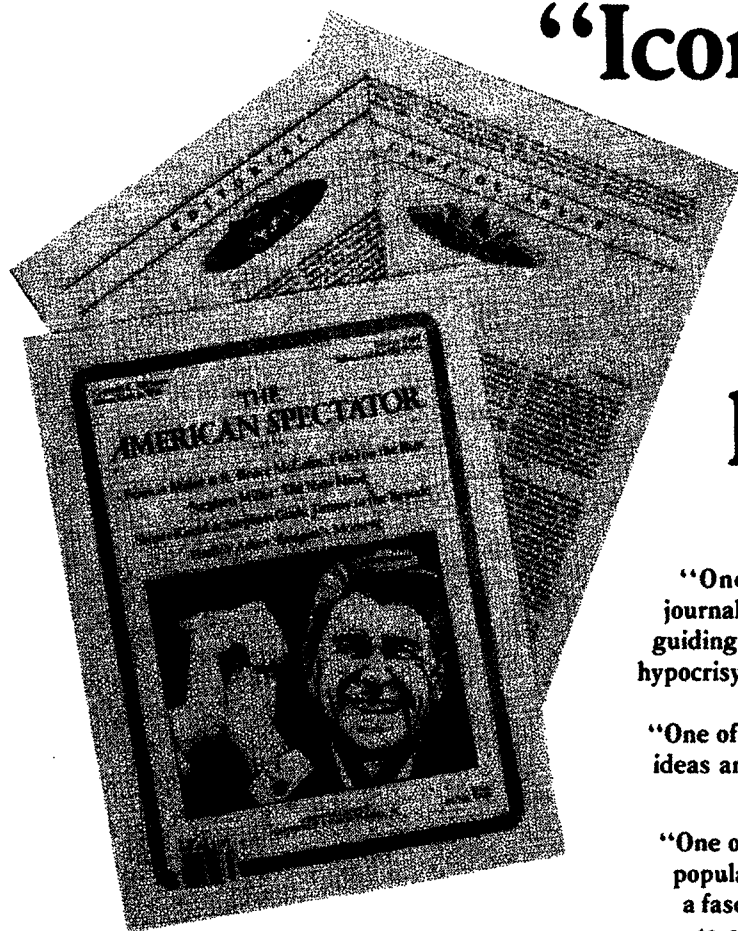
The chapter on blacks is also far from a recital of conventional pieties. Drawing on Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman's statistical study of slavery, *Time on the Cross*, as well as on the work of some of their critics, Sowell presents a balanced view of slavery in the United States, a condition that was physically far better than slavery else-

where in the Western hemisphere but spiritually and intellectually more degrading. The post-Emancipation leadership of the Negro community, Sowell points out, derived largely from the former "free persons of color," who in 1860 numbered nearly half a million. Most of them were literate, and from their earlier freedom they had acquired the ability to make the best use of whatever opportunities later became available.

According to Sowell, there has been significant economic, political, and social progress for blacks during the past two or three decades; but there has also been some retrogression—in the number of female-headed households, in the proportion of blacks on welfare, in the rate of unemployment. What should be done about the mass of black teenagers, many of them virtually illiterate and maladjusted to a world that is, so they have been taught, implacably prejudiced against them? In commenting on their unhappy state, Sowell quotes from the most famous black militant of two generations ago, W.E.B. Du Bois. If white prejudice disappeared overnight, Du Bois wrote, "it would not make very much difference in the positions occupied by [most] Negroes. . . . Some few would be promoted, some few would get new places [but] the mass would remain as they are." For Sowell the importance of this remarkable observation lies not in its empirical validity, which would be difficult to test, but in Du Bois's perception that discrimination against all blacks had to be distinguished conceptually from the idea of an appropriate return to individuals of low ability.

As a black, Thomas Sowell is especially fascinated by the history of the Irish in America. He emphasizes the many parallels between them and blacks—in culture, in the occupations or types of business they entered or avoided, in social pathology. Race was not a factor in the long hostility to the Irish; their poverty-bred behavior was. Yet

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against long odds and after a struggle of several generations, Irish Catholics succeeded in climbing the American ladder of success, reaching a point just below that of Jews (according to data amassed by Andrew M. Greeley).

Sowell was drawn into the study of ethnic relations by his experiences as a black in American society, and he nowhere ignores the racism that blacks have had to endure. But he does not believe that race is the only factor to be considered. So-called segregation *partly* results from a preference for living among one's own kind—a fact that seems not to have occurred to those, social scientists and government planners alike, who have contrived the various elaborate “segregation indexes.” As Sowell's examples suggest, the present condition—not to mention the trend—of black-white relations in America is not so simple as it has been typically portrayed.

Every ethnic group, Sowell writes, has encountered artificial obstacles to its progress in the United States, but generally these have been less restrictive and more temporary than elsewhere in the world. Problems of the poor and the powerless repeat themselves over and over, changing only with the groups that are most affected. However real and severe, none of these afflictions is historically unprecedented. From the fact that in the past one ethnic group after another has been able to rise from its low estate, Sowell draws two main conclusions: first, that one can be reasonably hopeful about the future of those now at the bottom; second, that the social system which makes this advance possible is altogether a good and valuable one.

Neither conclusion fits in with the ideology which dominates much of today's research and teaching in ethnic studies. Just because it refutes, on almost every page, virtually every element of our received understanding of ethnicity in America, this is an important and gripping work. Here is evidence of a first-rate mind that has surveyed a seemingly familiar landscape and found not only new contours but patches of genuine and enduring wisdom.

Surveying the 70's

NEW RULES: SEARCHING FOR SELF-FULFILLMENT IN A WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN. By DANIEL YANKELOVICH. *Random House*. 278 pp. \$15.95.

Reviewed by

ROBERT WILLIAM KAGAN

IF sociologists have their way, it is going to be difficult to remember the 1970's with anything but displeasure. The latest attack on that much-maligned decade comes from the pollster Daniel Yankelovich in his book, *New Rules*. On the basis of surveys taken by his own firm, Yankelovich claims that in the 70's Americans became thoroughly preoccupied with the search for self-fulfillment. They rejected all the old values associated with the traditional ethic of self-denial—the importance of success, respectability, family, institutions, money—and embraced instead a “duty-to-self” ethic which placed personal needs above all else.

The seeds of this revolution in our “psychoculture” were planted, according to Yankelovich, in the post-World War II period when America began to experience unprecedented affluence, and Americans to assume that they could always get more of everything. But just when this “psychology of affluence” finally took hold, in the 70's, the economic conditions which had fostered it disappeared.

Now we are in a bind. We have moved from “an uptight culture set in a dynamic economy to a dynamic culture set in an uptight economy.” The “psychology of me-firstism and more-of-everything-ism,” which swept over us in our uncontrolled striving for self-fulfillment, is completely unsuited to our new economic circumstances. We have found that the world has “been turned upside down,” and hence have come to view our future with anxiety and pessimism.

But Yankelovich does hold out hope. The world may be upside down, but it is not uninhabitable.

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Just as Americans once abandoned an ethic of self-denial for one of self-fulfillment, they can now adopt a new social ethic, one more suited to a period of economic limitations. Yankelovich believes that this may already be happening. “New rules of living,” he predicts, will emphasize “commitments” of every sort—to people, institutions, objects, beliefs, ideas, places, nature, projects, experiences, adventures, and callings.” These new rules will fit nicely into America's economic future because “developing deeper relations with people and things does not demand great amounts of money, nor does reverential thinking, or the creation of community, or a deepened concern with past and future.”

Yankelovich's interpretation of recent American history, as well as his prescription for America's future, bears some resemblance to the recent work of such otherwise disparate sociologists as Christopher Lasch and Daniel Bell (the latter expresses his admiration for *New Rules* on the book's jacket). What distinguishes Yankelovich from these critics are the myriad statistics he offers to buttress his case. Yankelovich is first and foremost a survey-taker, and his survey results are the bedrock of his study.

One major problem with *New Rules* is that Yankelovich's statistics fall to pieces under even the mildest scrutiny. He reports, for example, that “by the late 70's, my firm's studies showed more than seven out of ten Americans (72 percent) spending a great deal of time thinking about themselves and their inner lives.” Such a statement might hardly raise an eyebrow but for the precise statistic, on whose back Yankelovich would soar beyond the mere speculations of sociologists and philosophers into the exacting field of science. What he offers is not opinion but evidence, not a guess but a number.

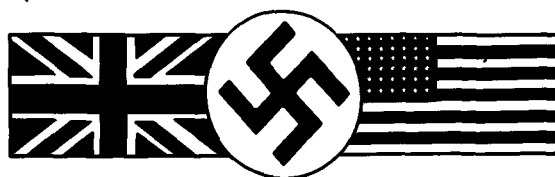
But what does the number mean, and where does it come from? Yankelovich never explains. Perhaps he simply asked a lot of people? If so he might have said that 72 percent *think* they spend a great deal of time thinking about themselves. And how much is “a great deal of

time" and what does it mean to think about oneself? Is it good or bad? Surely a respondent could interpret these phrases differently; by what standard is a pollster to judge? Is there an "average" amount of time human beings spend thinking about themselves? How do we compare today's thinkers with yesterday's? Yankelovich implies that 72 percent is a lot of people to be spending a lot of time thinking about themselves ("this in a nation notorious for its impatience with inwardness"), but he frankly admits that "we do not have comparable data from earlier periods."

Most of Yankelovich's statistics suffer from the same problem. The words, "surveys show," lend an air of superficial plausibility to his conclusions, enhanced by his recourse to a computer program known as the Singleton segmentation procedure, whose "special virtue . . . is its objectivity: it locates factors that differentiate among groups of people without being 'told' in advance what those characteristics might be." Without being "told," the computer came up with just the group of people Yankelovich needed for an in-depth study within the larger investigation of his book: those members of the American working force "most thoroughly involved in the quest for self-fulfillment." These especially selfish people, who made up 17 percent of his respondents, represent the "strong form of the self-fulfillment predicament," and for Yankelovich offer the best way to understand modern American society as a whole.

He examines the "strong formers" in two ways; first by looking at how they responded to his survey as a group, and second through personal interviews with a handful of them. For the first, he provides 17 survey questions on which strong formers showed their true colors. For example, 32 percent said they avoid junk food; 41 percent said they would willingly seek psychotherapy; 71 percent "feel the need to find more excitement and sensation"; 46 percent "feel a strong need for 'new experiences'"; 77 percent "want something mean-

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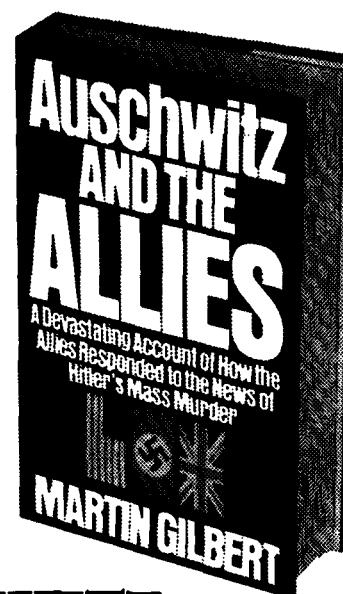
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ingful to work toward"; 65 percent would favor a "more creative life" over financial "well-being."

Whatever meaning these statistics might have is undercut by another set of statistics to which Yankelovich pays little attention. His strong formers, it turns out, compared with the rest of the respondents, are predominantly young, single, well-educated, and wealthy. Their parents, moreover, are much more highly educated and presumably much richer than other parents. Clearly, all the computer discovered was that elite group of young adults with the leisure, the money, and the vocabulary to think about life in terms of "self-fulfillment," and to profess indifference to such base concerns as "financial well-being." The spiritual ancestors of many of these "strong formers" could have been found dancing in fountains in their evening clothes in the 1920's or discussing nihilism in the drawing rooms of 19th-century Russian estates. In modern America they may have to work for a living, but it is not surprising that they demand "self-fulfillment" from their jobs. Explaining all of American society on the basis of their beliefs and attitudes is like explaining the 20's on the basis of F. Scott Fitzgerald's classmates at Princeton.

The personal interviews in *New Rules* show that the group which the computer picked out is really not a group at all, at least not in the way Yankelovich claims. For the "strong form of the self-fulfillment predicament" includes: a young couple with an income of \$60,000 and no children, in which the husband sleeps around and wants to run off with a cocaine dealer and live in Maine, and the wife has anxiety attacks; a somewhat older couple in which the husband is an unhappy assistant professor and the wife runs off with another woman; a woman who divorces her heartless, cheating husband, moves with her children to California and becomes a lawyer; and a wealthy businessman who says he *might* someday like to change his "lifestyle." It is hard to imagine what these people have in common with one another, except marital problems and the desire,

but not always the ability, to be happy in whatever way they may define it. Some are weak and utterly selfish; some are courageous and responsible. And despite Yankelovich's claim that strong formers place "their personal self-fulfillment high above all other concerns—above money, security, performing well, or working at a satisfying job," none of these people is prepared to make such a sacrifice. The best example Yankelovich can come up with is a "weak former" who, in his mid-fifties, decides to let someone else run his hardware store and moves to Florida. This is a revolution in American values?

WHATEVER good may come from studying surveys and opinion polls, they are terribly flawed instruments even for predicting something as simple as a presidential election, much less for psychoanalyzing an entire society. People's responses depend on how they interpret the questions and how they feel about answering them. Yankelovich fails to acknowledge this limitation. He also fails to see that people's views change as they age. He surveys a group of young adults who say that they are freer than their parents, less inhibited, more open-minded, less concerned with financial security, and concludes that Americans have changed drastically in the past two decades. But has there ever been a time when many young people did not feel this way?

Yankelovich proclaims that the world is upside down without giving any notion of what it looked like when it was right side up. He compares today's society which, when he is not blinded by his statistics, he can see in all its nuances and diversity, with a past society that he has utterly stereotyped. He speaks about "traditional values" as if, until just recently, people lived by them rigidly and unquestioningly.

Leaving aside the glaring flaws in Yankelovich's pseudo-scientific method, however, we still have his main thesis—that selfishness brought on our present difficulties, and unselfishness can allay them. "Had we not been lost in our introspective reveries," he writes, "we might have noticed what was hap-

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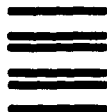
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pening to us . . . we would have conserved energy after 1973 instead of doubling our oil imports from the Arab nations . . . we would have built smaller cars . . . we would have modified our entitlement programs . . . we would have obliged citizens to choose between these programs and other expenditures. . . ."

Who is this "we"? Yankelovich's studies are based on the assumption that "every now and then a new way of conceiving life and its meaning arises spontaneously from the great mass of the population." While this generalization may hold true for some aspects of our culture—such as attitudes toward sexual mores, the role of women, and religion, matters about which Yankelovich has shockingly little to say—it cannot explain all of social behavior. Most of the errors for which Yankelovich scolds American society in the 70's were really just instances of bad political leadership, not the result of an ill-suited "psychoculture." It is startling that throughout his entire study Yankelovich does not mention the name of one American President. It is as if all social decisions were made collectively, and almost unconsciously, by some mass will.

If *New Rules* had been published a couple of years ago, it would have rested comfortably on Jimmy Carter's night-table, for its message, like that of Carter in his famous speech about our "malaise," is that Americans have only themselves to blame for their present difficulties. They have been selfish. They must lower their sights. Until the American people act, government is powerless to effect a change for the better.

Yankelovich's answer, a new and less selfish "social ethic," based on "developing deeper relations with people and things," is the kind of wisdom that reigned in the Carter years, and like much of that wisdom it has been repudiated, at least in the political arena. Whether it will be repudiated as well in the cultural arena, the arena of ideas and attitudes, remains to be seen; perhaps in future surveys Yankelovich will yet enlighten us on that point.

Early American

JACKSONIAN JEW. By JONATHAN D. SARNA. *Holmes and Meier*. 233 pp. \$29.50.

Reviewed by DAVID SINGER

MORDECAI NOAH (1785-1851) was a remarkable character. The best-known American Jew of his day, he was at once a bold visionary and a self-centered con- niver, a champion of democratic values and an apologist for slavery, a staunch American patriot and a fiercely loyal Jew. "Major" Noah, as he was called, achieved prominence in politics, journalism, and the theater. Today, however, he is best remembered for his attempt to establish a temporary Jewish "homeland" near Buffalo, New York.

Noah, a "Sephardized" Jew, was born into a poor but well-connected family. He entered political life in 1808 in Philadelphia, when he, together with other "Democratic Young Men," supported James Madison for President. In 1809, Noah went to Charleston, S.C., where he edited the *City Gazette*. A "hawk," he strongly supported the war of 1812. After serving as American consul in Tunis for two years (1813-1815), Noah settled permanently in New York City, where he earned his living as a newspaper publisher and became embroiled in politics.

Noah evolved over time from a liberal-minded Jeffersonian and Jacksonian to a conservative Whig—a transformation to be explained as much by personality clashes and considerations of patronage as by ideological principle. At various points in his career he first strongly supported then vigorously opposed such notable political figures as De Witt Clinton, Andrew Jackson, and Martin Van Buren. Noah himself held three patronage positions: as a Democrat, he was appointed sheriff of New York City in 1821 and surveyor of New York port in 1829; as a Whig, he was appointed a judge

DAVID SINGER, co-editor of the *American Jewish Year Book*, frequently reviews books of Jewish interest in these pages.

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of the New York court of sessions in 1841.

Noah's influence on the political scene was exerted in the main through his newspapers—the New York *National Advocate*, the New York *Enquirer*, and the New York *Evening Star*. These newspapers, in the fashion of the time, were linked to political parties. Noah, however, valiantly strove to maintain an independent stance, and to avoid the gimmicks of the penny press. He hired talented reporters, made use of foreign correspondents, and ran feature articles by leading cultural figures.

Noah achieved his greatest popular success as a writer for the stage. His plays—they included *She Would Be a Soldier*, *Marion*, and *The Grecian Captive*—may well be forgotten today, but in their time they helped to steer the American theater in an independent direction by drawing on themes from American history.

It is a matter of some significance that Jonathan D. Sarna's study of Noah began as a doctoral dissertation at Yale. All too often, the writing of American Jewish history has been plagued by a narrow parochialism, telling the Jewish side of the story while ignoring the broader context. It has also tended to be apologetic, aimed at enhancing the status of Jews. Both of these characteristics were very much in evidence in Isaac Goldberg's *Major Noah* (1938), the standard work on its subject prior to the appearance of Sarna's volume. *Jacksonian Jew*, however, is happily free of any trace of parochialism or apologetics. Sarna considers Noah's career in an appropriately broad framework, relying heavily on contemporary newspaper accounts and correspondence in developing his portrait of the man. And while he clearly has a soft spot in his heart for Noah, Sarna never attempts to conceal the obnoxious side of the "Major's" personality, or the repugnant views which he held on some matters.

If Noah succeeded in making his mark on American life, Sarna makes it clear, he did so as an unapologetic Jew: "To the end, [Noah] remained a conscious,

loyal, and proud member of the Jewish community." Far from hiding his Jewishness, Noah advertised it, as when he wrote to Secretary of State Robert Smith in support of a job application:

I wish to prove to foreign Powers that our Government is not regulated in the appointment of their officers by religious distinction, and on the score of policy I know of no measure which can so promptly lead members of the Hebrew Nation to emigrate to this country . . . than to see one of their persuasion appointed to an honorable office attended with the confidence of the people.

(The self-serving element in this appeal is not to be lost.)

Noah never once retreated in the face of anti-Semitism, even when his political and journalistic rivals used it as a powerful tool against him. Small wonder, then, that Gentile Americans came to see him as the representative Jew. Noah played the part to the hilt. As Sarna writes:

He displayed his Judaism publicly, he answered questions about Jewish practices, and he defended the character of his people against all attacks. He also took an increasingly active role in Jewish communal activities. During the last quarter-century of his life, an impressive number of synagogues, schools, and philanthropies benefited from his advice, assistance, and leadership.

Noah's project to establish a Jewish refuge, to be named Ararat, gave strong expression to his three great loves—love of the Jewish people, love of America, and love of himself. Noah envisioned Ararat as a temporary "homeland," where persecuted Jews from around the world could "improve" (i.e., modernize) themselves, thus speeding "that great and final restoration to their ancient heritage which the times so powerfully indicate" (the words are from Noah's "Proclamation to the Jews"). As for America, it would reap the benefits of the superior skills and ample capital of the Jews whom Noah hoped to attract to Ararat. Finally—and quite characteristically of the man—Noah held out a choice plum for himself: he was to become "Judge

of Israel," i.e., the person in charge of the whole operation. Unfortunately for the "Major," the Ararat project never got off the ground. The Jews, Sarna observes, "neither needed nor wanted an isolated asylum in a faraway land ruled by a self-appointed judge."

As a member of a persecuted minority striving to achieve equality in the United States, Noah might well have been expected to express sympathy for other minorities. In fact, however, he was both a nativist and an apologist for slavery. While Noah claimed that he was not anti-Catholic, and most certainly did not seek to stop immigrants from entering the United States (how could he?), he helped to establish the Native American Democratic Association, a group working to bar non-citizens from voting until they had accumulated twenty years' residence in the country.

Noah's motivation here was clear-cut and utterly selfish: he wanted to prevent Irish Catholic immigrants in New York City from voting for his political opponents (at the time, the Democrats). As for slavery, Noah quite amazingly defended it not merely as a necessary evil, but as a positive good. Thus he wrote:

There is liberty under the name of slavery. A field negro has his cottage, his wife, and children, his easy task, his little patch of corn and potatoes, his garden and fruit, which are his revenue and property. The house servant has handsome clothing, his luxurious meals, his admitted privileges, a kind master, and an indulgent and frequently fond mistress.

As Sarna sees it, Noah's position on the slavery issue was rooted paradoxically in his view that the Union had to be preserved at all costs. He regarded the all-out abolitionist attack on slavery as a threat to American unity, and hence took an extreme position on the other side. (Incidentally, the *Liberator*, the leading abolitionist journal, said of Noah: "If this Judge be a fair specimen of the race, it is no

wonder that they have been an insulted and despised people.")

Standing in bold contrast to Noah's hostile attitude toward blacks was his positive attitude toward the Indians, whom he saw as virtuous and noble. While this positive assessment reflected a commendable liberality of spirit, there was also an element of Jewish self-interest involved. Noah insisted—and Sarna makes it clear that many Americans shared this view—that the Indians sprang from the ten lost tribes of Israel. Were they not monotheists? Did not their tribal configurations, symbols, and customs bear a strikingly Jewish stamp? Noah was fully aware that through these arguments he was making it possible for American Jews to lay claim to both ends of the Protestant-American arch. Sarna states the point well:

[I]f the Jews and the Indians were one people, the Jews were then both "the first people in the old world"—the ancestors of Christianity—and "the rightful inheritors of the new." Jews could proclaim proudly, "We were here first."

As Sarna conceives it, Noah "embodied but could not resolve the tension faced by all minority groups: the simultaneous search for the benefits of wholehearted assimilation and the security of ethnic-roots identification." Certainly, historical hindsight may indicate this to be the case. Noah himself, however, would no doubt have chosen to stress another point: the astonishing openness of American society in its treatment of Jewish citizens. While anti-Semitism surely existed in the early national period, it was a marginal (and residual) phenomenon, something which could cause pain but could not fundamentally hinder Jewish advancement. Noah's own career as a politician and journalist bears eloquent testimony to this. It was Mordecai Noah who freely chose to make his Jewishness a relevant factor in his life; America, for the most part, considered it an irrelevance. In Jewish historical experience, here indeed was something radically new.

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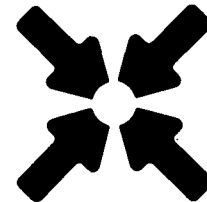
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The "Art" of Jazz

RIDING ON A BLUE NOTE. By GARY GIDDENS. Oxford University Press. 313 pp. \$16.95.

Reviewed by ROBERT RICHMAN

FOR much of its history, jazz has been considered a form of entertainment, music to be dined, danced, and drunk to. The fact that jazz was (and, in its truer contemporary manifestations, still is) based on architecturally very simple musical ideas, along with the circumstance that it grew up in fields, churches, and brothels, impelled the musical establishment of the late 19th and early 20th century to consider jazz an unruly "popular" music, perhaps a cut above Tin Pan Alley but certainly

more than a few notches below the level of European classical music.

In the last two decades, however, the belief has spread that jazz is as serious—or as "classical"—as the music of the European tradition. In fact, there seems to be little question about it now. Both jazz musicians and fans consider this music higher in aesthetic value than rock or folk music. As John Rockwell pointed out recently in the *New York Times*, jazz players share the same grant sources, performance circuits, and self-image as their counterparts in the classical field. And as for critics of jazz, they seem so sure that jazz is the equal of classical music that they rarely bother even to raise the issue.

Gary Giddens, jazz critic of the *Village Voice*, is no exception. In this collection of his articles and reviews from the past few years, he writes nothing about the status of jazz, only about its beauty and pain, its achievements and failures

as seen through such personalities as Dizzy Gillespie, Red Rodney, Betty Carter, and Wes Montgomery. In a few more broad-ranging pieces, Giddens also offers a number of fairly astute and adept considerations of jazz styles.

Still, it is possible to glean from this book an understanding of how the current high valuation of jazz developed. Essentially, according to Giddens, the image of jazz began to shift from that of a popular dance music to that of an "exploratory concert music" with the advent of the "bebop" style beginning around 1940 and associated with musicians like Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk. This new rhythmic technique enabled players to improvise more fully and expressively than previously; before long, the improvisatory "solo" became the centerpiece of a jazz performance. The new "art" of jazz was thus located in what Giddens calls the "existential bravura" of the soloist, his ability to "stand up and reduce the ensemble to his respectful accompaniment."

But, says Giddens, "the opposition" to the new style was "vicious." Not only did critics initially castigate the bebop soloists, the audience spurned it as well, and so did the record companies. The whole musical establishment, in fact, seemed to conspire against the new players, among whom a self-defeating bitterness set in. This feeling was personified by Charlie Parker, "an authentic musical genius," according to Giddens, dead of drink and drugs at the age of thirty-four.

But it was not simply the bad reception that led bop players to self-destruct. Musicians really felt drugs would better round out their alienated lives—the lives they expressed in their new brand of music. Giddens: "Junk helped the musicians get closer to an illusory 'cultural tradition,' though some blacks must have felt it was a cultural imperative." This "imperative," fueled by the historical connection of jazz to loose morals and bawdy living, was what had made it easier for the musical establishment to consider jazz unserious in the first place.

ROBERT RICHMAN has published reviews in COMMENTARY, the Times Literary Supplement (London), and the Village Voice.

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Change had to come, and it did. By the late 1950's there was a full-fledged movement within the ranks to reject the drug ethos; it was spearheaded by John Coltrane, the most important musician of the time, who, according to Giddens, "brought cleanliness, respect, and pride back into the music after a period of degradation with heroin." There was a parallel effort to disassociate jazz from the low life and sleaziness in general. Musicians like Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, and Cecil Taylor vigorously proclaimed the gravity of their efforts.

The musical result of the revolt against bop, which came to be known as free jazz, sounded, "to the uninitiated, tumultuously discordant and—because it abandoned traditional time signatures—unswinging." In addition, improvisation in free jazz was based on scales rather than chords (as in bebop), making it even harder to listen to. These enormous changes were largely due to the influence of avant-garde classical music, particularly the work of Schoenberg and Stravinsky.

Most progressive jazz players in recent years have followed the avant-garde tradition of Cecil Taylor and Ornette Coleman, and have borrowed heavily from contemporary classical music. Among them are Leroy Jenkins, a violinist trained in the classical tradition; Anthony Braxton, whose music, says Giddens, is "heavily involved with the fashions of European avant-garde"; Leo Smith, who, Giddens remarks, "eschews the term jazz and is opposed to rigid song forms, including the blues"; and Keith Jarrett, whose music is often indistinguishable from contemporary classical piano music. Of course there are still those who play music that is firmly in the tradition of jazz—in Giddens's definition, "swinging." And finally there are those who call themselves jazz players but who really produce a kind of manufactured black Muzak. Essentially, however, progressive jazz over the past twenty years has been increasingly defined by the incorporation of classical elements, the adoption of a defiantly anti-commercial self-image, and the obfuscation or re-

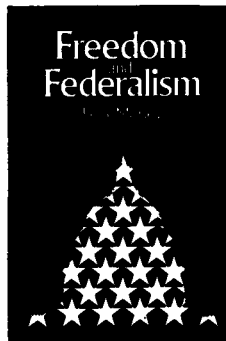
placement of those elements that had previously defined jazz, namely, the blues format and the swinging improvisatory solo.

Is this "serious" music? Perhaps a better question is whether this "serious" music is actually jazz, a question to which the answer is no. What Giddens, in a fancifully complex phrase, calls the "panstylistic

eclecticism" of the 70's is so far afield of the swing tradition that Leo Smith seems right to avoid the word "jazz" for it altogether.

What, then, of true jazz? One difficulty in assessing its status as compared with classical music lies precisely in the process of "classicization" that has taken place over the last twenty years and that has

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conferred aesthetic legitimacy not only on free jazz but also on more traditional forms up to and including bebop. Still, a simple comparison reveals that there have been no jazz scores to match, in grandeur or range of feeling, classical scores. Obviously, this is a limitation inherent in the jazz form: it simply cannot accommodate the range of experience or feeling of the symphony or concerto. It is true that jazz often displays a greater rhythmic ingenuity than classical

music, but rhythm in jazz functions as an essential base on which all the more complex and richly meaningful ideas have to be developed—a function much like a heartbeat in relation to the experience of life—and those ideas are too often missing. As for the tradition of improvisation, which classical music has not developed at all, it has its moments of undeniable and transcendent beauty, but again these are merely moments, and even taken together they do not equal,

in breadth or scope, many classical compositions.

Gary Giddens is as much a part of the complex history of the legitimization of jazz as are the musicians themselves. His high status as a critic is not undeserved, but it too owes something to the process by which jazz has come to be treated with the seriousness of a "classical form." Even though he criticizes the classically oriented musicians as "self-indulgent," "stifling," and "difficult," he owes them a debt for having elevated the music they play to the point where it is regarded as high art, for in doing so they in turn helped to raise the writing about jazz out of the realm of insular gossip and hype.

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Remaining Human

WITHIN THE WHIRLWIND. By EUGENIA GINZBURG. Translated by IAN BOLAND. Introduction by HEINRICH BÖLL. *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich*. 423 pp. \$17.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD SCHAPIRO

THE author, a university lecturer in Kazan, was thirty-one in 1937 when she was arrested on a trumped-up charge of "counter-revolution." She died in Moscow, after rehabilitation, in 1977. Of those forty years, twenty were spent in prison camp, and exile in Magadan. During that time, her husband was also arrested and disappeared, the eldest of her two sons perished in Leningrad during the siege, her father died, and later her mother.

There were also occasions of joy—reunion after twelve years' separation with her younger son, Vasia (the distinguished writer Vasily Aksenov who now lives in the U.S.), the adoption of a delightful little girl Tonia (now an actress), and above all the linking of her life and her later marriage to a fellow prisoner, a doctor of German origin, Anton Walter—incidentally

LEONARD SCHAPIRO, the noted British scholar, is the author of *Turgenev: His Life and Times* and *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, among other books*.

ficial, by being assigned to work in camp hospitals, nurseries, kitchens, or farms. The second part of the book deals with life in exile in Magadan after her release from camp in 1947—again she was fortunate not to be given an arbitrary second sentence at the expiration of the first. Magadan life for former camp inmates represented a kind of no-man's land between freedom and slavery. But it was characterized by a powerful bond among the exiles, expressed in their total alienation from the world of officialdom, "they." It is recorded in a moving scene when mother and son (aged sixteen) are reunited after twelve years, and the boy whispers to her, "Don't cry in front of them. . . ." He is already part of the world of "us."

As in the first volume, there are vivid descriptions of this period of the Soviet experience which has left deep scars both on those who lived through it and on those who now have to come to terms with the knowledge that it happened. But this is no mere work of description—it is not even a "novel," as Heinrich Böll calls it in his introduction, although it is as absorbing to read as any novel. The book is really a spiritual or religious tract. Probably under the influence of Dr. Walter, who was a devout

Roman Catholic, Evgenia Ginzburg came to accept a world in which God's will prevails, inscrutable in its operation—in fact, the kind of religious faith-without-a-church which so many Soviet Russians apparently accept today. (There is no evidence in this book that the author's Jewish origins left any trace on her outlook.)

In the case of the many vile savages whom Mrs. Ginzburg depicts, there is much less outright condemnation than an attempt to see the brutality as a manifestation of the sin which is in every human being, but which is capable of being redeemed by the divine spark which can, given the right circumstances, prevail in everyone. (In Stalin, too? She does not attempt this question.) Dr. Walter consoled her one day, "True, man has a beast in him, but the beast cannot triumph over man in the end." And, as she tells us in speaking of her image of him, the main thing she wanted to show was "that the victim of inhumanity can remain the bearer of all that is good, of forbearance and of brotherly feelings toward his fellow man."

The point of the book seems to be that for Evgenia Ginzburg, suffering proved that survival in the conditions in which she was forced to spend many years of her youth was not just a matter of luck, but

of faith, and that the flashes of humanity which she evoked in others and which saved her from perishing were in some way a response to her faith, to her own charity of outlook. The point is summed up for me in her words: "We must be grateful to life for everything, and life will give generously in return."

Those who pass this book by as yet another of those accounts of concentration camp life will have missed an ennobling experience. Yet even in terms of narrative alone, this is an outstanding work of literature. No one who reads it can easily forget Evgenia Ginzburg's account of the effect of the news of the death of Stalin or, in a different vein, her description of a violent orgy staged in the camp by real criminals among the prisoners (who were, of course, both the favorites of the authorities and the scourge of the "politicals"). The book abounds also in skillful pen-portraits of scores of her fellow inmates in which these outcasts, often in their last stages of degradation and decay, are illumined by the author's charity and warmth, and almost become recognizable as human beings once again.

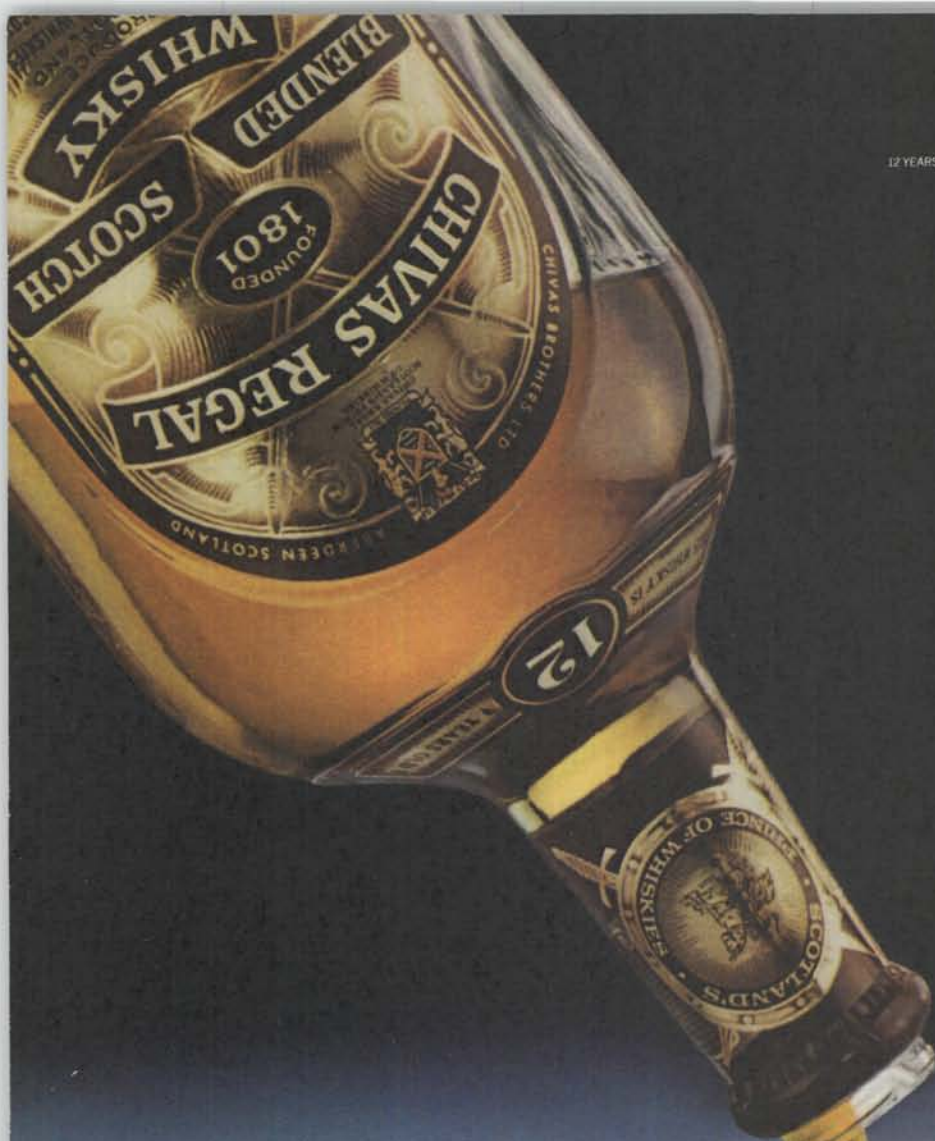
The English translation by Ian Boland is adequate, though it scarcely does justice to the vigor and beauty of the original Russian.

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